THE OFFICIAL SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

RESIDENT EVIL THE FIRST REVIEW!

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

SEGA No.1 FOR SATURN

ISSUE 23 £4.50
SEPTEMBER 1997



SPECTACULAR! SENSATIONAL!

MARVEL SUPER HEROES

EXCLUSIVE!

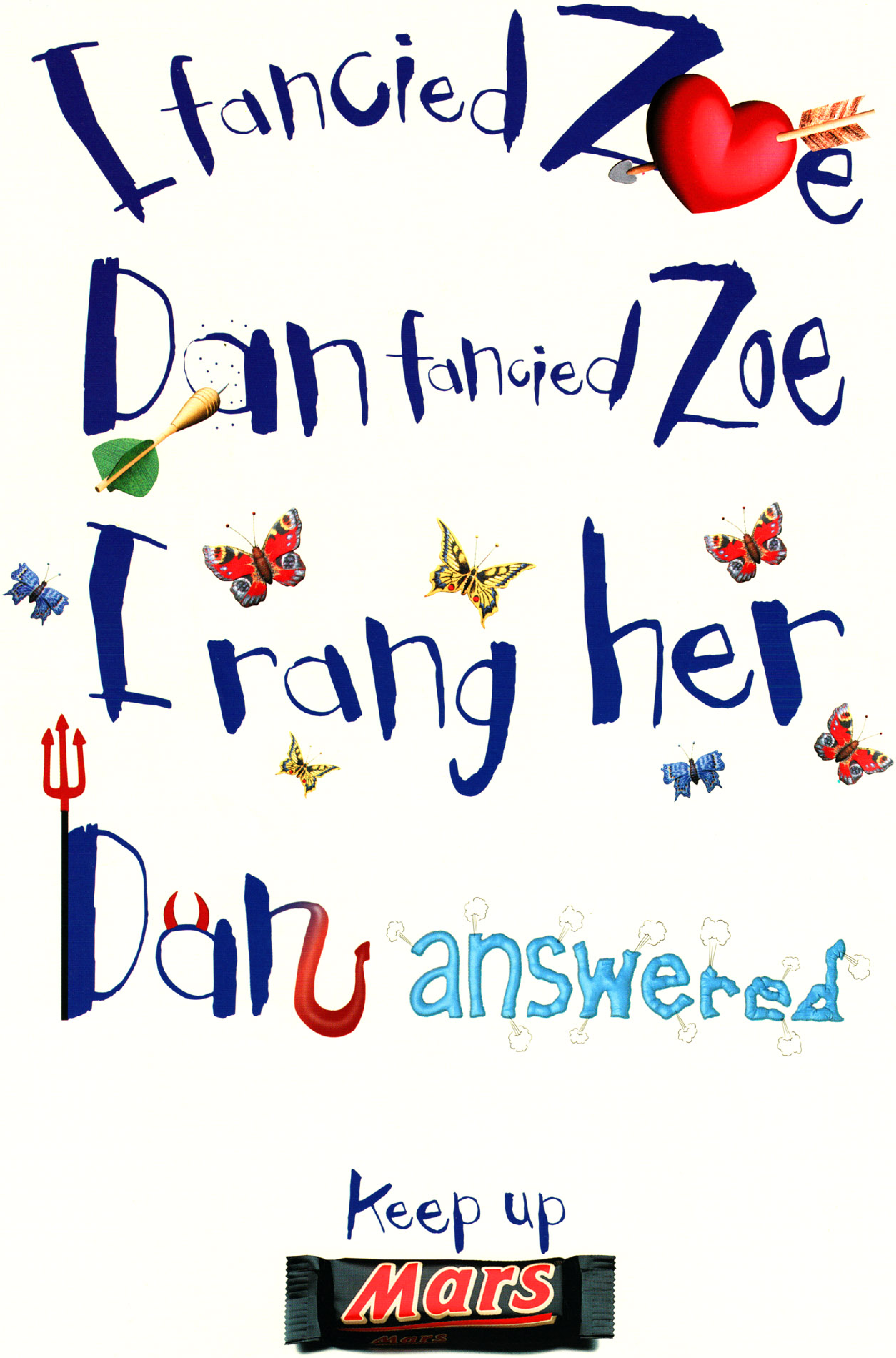
FOUR PLAYABLE DEMOS INCLUDING SONIC JAM!

NO CD? DEMAND SATISFACTION FROM YOUR NEWSAGENT IMMEDIATELY!
WE REGRET THAT THE CD PROMOTION IS NOT AVAILABLE TO THE READERS OUTSIDE THE UK

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PLUS: GRANDIA: AWESOME! WARCRAFT 2, CROC LE MANS 24, SEGA TOURING CAR, LAST BRONX

THUNDERFORCE V SALAMANDER... AND MORE!


I fancied Zoe
Dan fancied Zoe
I rang her
Dan answered
Keep up
Mars
Mars



HIT THE BRAKES AND POWER-UP WITH TWIX®

After the phenomenal success of last year's event, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has once again teamed up with the confectionery masters at TWIX® to bring you the ultimate gaming challenge in the known cosmos! Yes, once again we are on a quest to discover the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer of the Year!





WIN £1000 WORTH OF SEGA GOODIES!
WIN A YEARS SUPPLY OF TWIX®
WIN £100 OF VIRGIN VOUCHERS!

THE EVENT: THE 1997 TWIX® JUNIOR GAMESPLAYER OF THE YEAR CHALLENGE!
THE DATE: OCTOBER 25, 1997
THE PLACE: VIRGIN MEGASTORE, OXFORD STREET, LONDON

WHAT'S THE DEAL?

It's fairly straightforward really. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE wants to hear from the very best Manx TT SuperBike players in the country! Fill in the form below and crow of your gargantuan achievements on this ace riding sim. We'll be choosing the seven best entries and whisking the lucky participants to London to take part in the final challenge - a head-to-head gladiatorial battle to the finish. In addition to those seven, last year's winner, one Robert Doubtfire of Kent, will be invited back to defend his title! Eight players enter but only one can be the winner!

B... B... BUT HOW?



When it comes to this challenge, we're only after the BEST! We want you to sit down with Manx TT right now and play like you've never played before! We want your best time on the reverse mirror version of the main TT course, as played in Time Attack mode. We think you'll agree that when it comes down to speed and technique, there's no better test on this ace biking game. All bikes in the game may be used for this challenge (bar the secret hidden sheep), so regular SATURN MAGAZINE readers will know how to access the hidden SuperBikes for even better times!

TWIX® JUNIOR GAMESPLAYER OF THE YEAR ENTRY FORM

MY BEST TIME ON THE REVERSE MIRROR TT TRACK IN MANX TT IS..........................

....

My name is..........................
My age is..........................
My address is..........................
My home telephone number is..........................

If aged under 16 please ask a parent or guardian to read and then sign the following: I verify that the above details are correct and hereby give my permission for the above named person to take part in the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer of the Year challenge, should they be selected.

Signed..........................
Date..........................

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

A veritable avalanche of gaming goodies will descend mightily upon the winner of this finest of challenges! When it comes to the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer of the Year, the stakes are high, but the rewards are spectacular!

THE GRAND PRIZE

The overall winner of the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer of the Year walks away with their choice of £1000 worth of Sega gear, plus £100 of Virgin Megastore vouchers, which the winner can spend on absolutely anything in ANY Virgin Megastore and being a TWIX® challenge, the victorious player can also expect to be showered with TWIX® style confectionery!

ALL PARTICIPANTS

The final eight challengers will ALL receive boxes and boxes of TWIX® bars plus exclusive Mechwarrior 2 jackets, as donated by the Virgin Megastore and a special medal!

I KNOW THE SCORE... WHAT NOW?

You've spent days and days honing your Manx TT skills, taking your steel steed to the max, but still you don't think you're good enough. Why not hit the brakes and power-up with a TWIX®? Think about strategy and technique as you break for the unique chocolate/caramel/biscuit experience that you can only get with TWIX®. Then back to the Saturn for more hardcore games playing!

Once you're happy with your score, note it down on the coupon supplied and send in your entry with five empty TWIX® wrappers (any TWIX® wrapper accepted) to TWIX® JUNIOR GAMESPLAYER OF THE YEAR 1997, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 37-39 Millharbour, Isle of Dogs, London E14 9TZ. The competition is only open to gamers under 18 years of age but you can enter as many times as you want. Entrants under 16 must be accompanied to the final by an adult. Sorry to you old codgers not eligible to enter, but them's the breaks...

IMPORTANT!
You must enclose five empty TWIX® wrappers with each entry form.
No purchase necessary. All entry forms must reach us by 10 TH October 1997.
You must be under 18 to enter. If you are under 16 an adult must be able to accompany you to the challenge.
All entries will be CAREFULLY VETTED so no cheating!
Please note that EMAP Images cannot be held responsible for any entries lost or damaged in the post.
Normal competition rules apply. Prize includes standard fare return rail fare to London.

Virgin MEGASTORE   Twix® A BREAK FROM THE NORM

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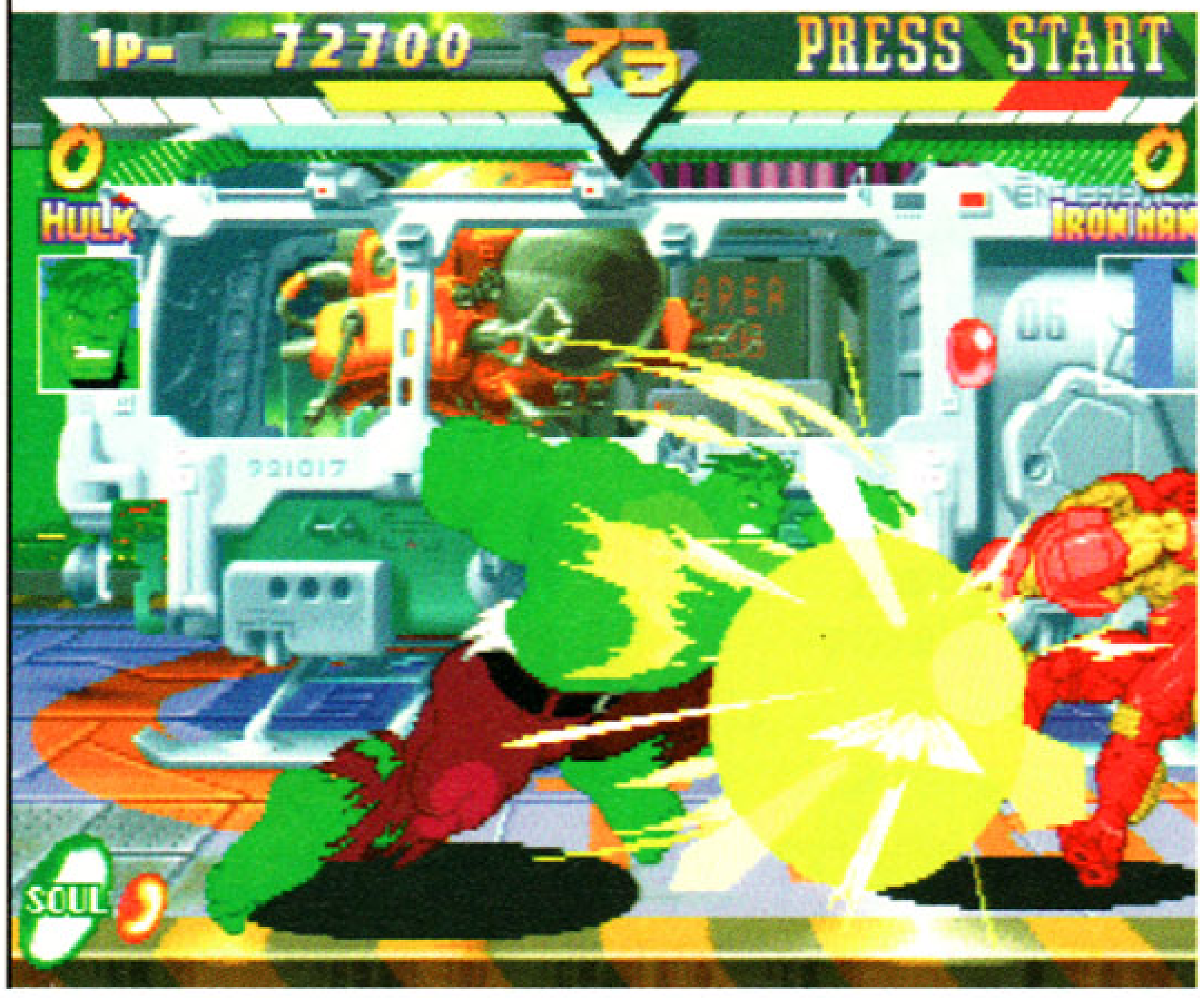
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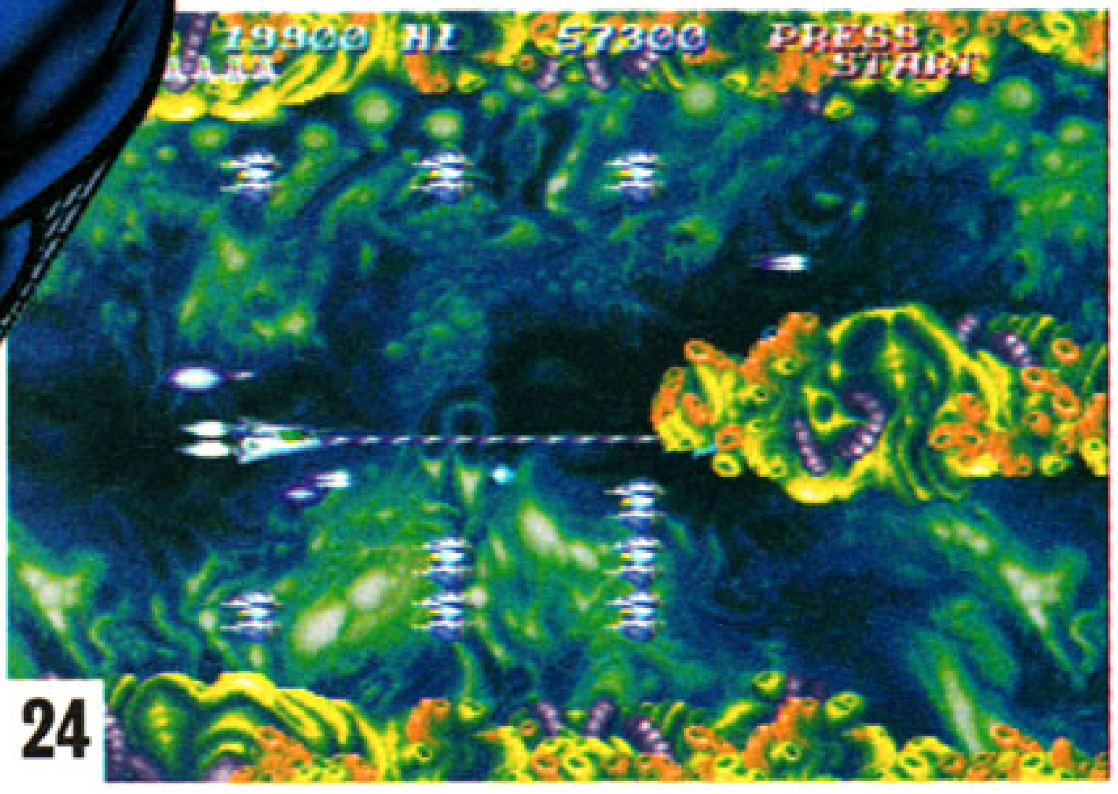
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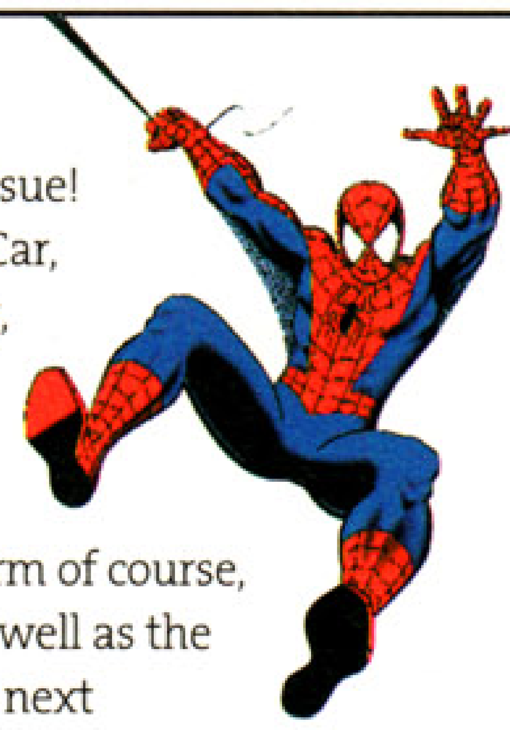
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NEWS



Occasionally, so much hardcore software arrives in so short a space of time that there's literally not enough pages in the issue! This month, with the likes of Grandia, ThunderForce V, Touring Car, complete Last Bronx and of course Marvel Super Heroes arriving, we've been literally spoilt for choice when it comes to quality wares. And of course, all of those titles bar one are TOTALLY EXCLUSIVE on the Saturn - and there's more where that came from, as the main news story this month reveals. In the short term of course, we've still got Duke Nukem 3D and Quake to look forward to, as well as the stunning Sonic R - games which we'll doubtless be raving about next month... As for demo CDs - well we're getting our act a bit more together here, so enjoy this issue's disc and look forward to some seriously cool stuff in the pipeline!

Rich Leadbetter,
Editor

Power-up Announcement

Saturn Memory Upgrade Revealed!

Saturn's memory tripled with new memory cartridge ■ Capcom's X-Men versus Street Fighter on the way ■ Vampire Savior and Marvel Super Heroes versus Street Fighter are on the way!



Excelsior! More Marvel madness guaranteed as the Saturn receives the cream of Capcom.





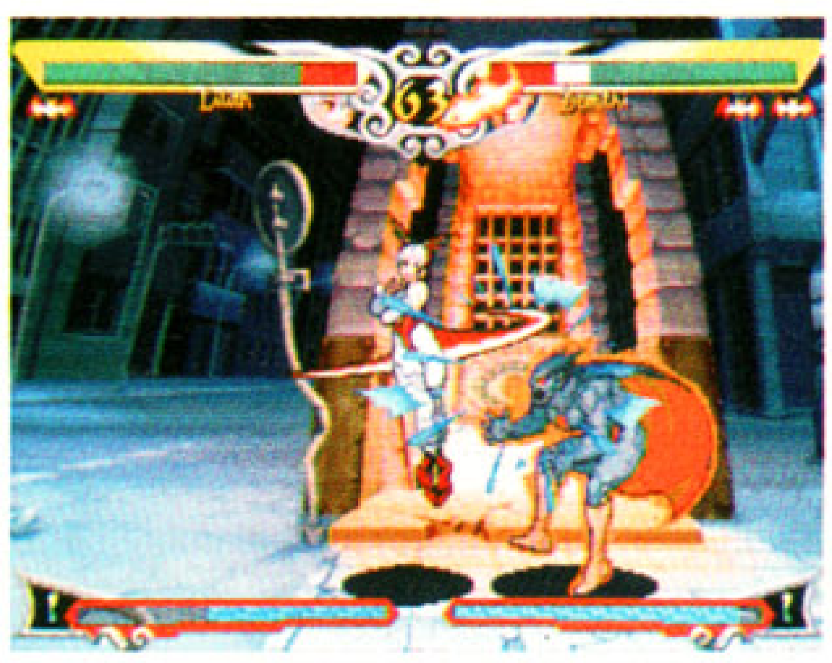
A MAJOR BOOST FOR THE SATURN was announced at the latest of Sega's regular "Power-Up" press conferences - a new four megabyte memory cartridge will be made available for the machine. Standing alongside Sega were Capcom, who instantly pledged support for the memory module in the form of three (possibly four) major arcade conversions.

In Japan at least, the cartridge will be available in Autumn, where the hardware will be bundled with the first of Capcom's announced conversions: X-Men versus Street Fighter. It's a fact that once you own the cart, you'll never need to buy another one again. Unlike the pre-programmed cart recently bundled with King of Fighters 95, this cart is essentially blank memory, used by the software.

Curiously, Capcom's wares were the only games that were announced. There was no talk of any first party



DarkStalkers 3: Awesome 2D



Vampire Savior: due in Japan by December.

Sega software making use of the upgrade, although Sega's mighty involvement with this release pretty much guarantees more support.

CAPCOM EXCLUSIVES?

A curious implication of the whole event was Capcom's commitment to the PlayStation. The firm have stated in the past that both Vampire Savior and X-Men versus Street Fighter would be Saturn exclusives and it looks as though Marvel Super Heroes versus Street Fighter is going the same way. According to Capcom, all three games are only possible because of the extra memory, which pretty much blows PlayStation conversions out of the water since the base machine actually has less memory to play around with than the vanilla Saturn.



STREET FIGHTER 3 IN THE HOUSE

Extremely under-rated, Street Fighter 3 failed to have the impact that Capcom expected it would have in the arcades. Having had the machine in the office for a few weeks we can see their frustration, because the game really is cool. Capcom have always said that a conversion would be out of the question on current home technology. However, this appears to have changed since the Power-Up conference. Video footage of the three announced games was shown, along with a flash of Street Fighter 3. Asked whether the game will appear on Saturn, the response was cryptic: the Saturn's best at 2D games. To be honest, we'd say that a conversion is now likely and currently only the Saturn has the power to do it properly...

Whilst Japan appeared to get pretty excited about this launch, the same thing can't be said of the western divisions of Sega. Neither America or Europe have any concrete plans on bringing the cart over, despite the heavyweight presence of Capcom's conversions.







Marvel Super Heroes versus Street Fighter isn't even out in the arcades yet, but Capcom have already announced a Saturn translation of the game!

News Analysis

Whatever happend to the VF3 upgrade?



VF3: When will the Saturn version appear?

WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE Saturn's four megabyte memory card, sources "in the know" have finally confirmed that the 3D accelerator cartridge for the Saturn isn't going to make it out of AM2's R&D labs. The reasons why were not forthcoming, but the word "cost" probably enters the equation at some point. This new memory cart is the only upgrade the Saturn's getting.

Will VF3 make use of it? One thing about memory is that you can never have too much of the stuff - ask any PC or Mac owner. AM2 spent many man-hours attempting to compress their arcade data to fit into their Saturn version of Virtua Fighter 2. That information has to be decompressed whilst the game is playing, effectively slowing the game down. With the cartridge, this could be drastically reduced, with the extra processing power translated into more polygons or faster action.

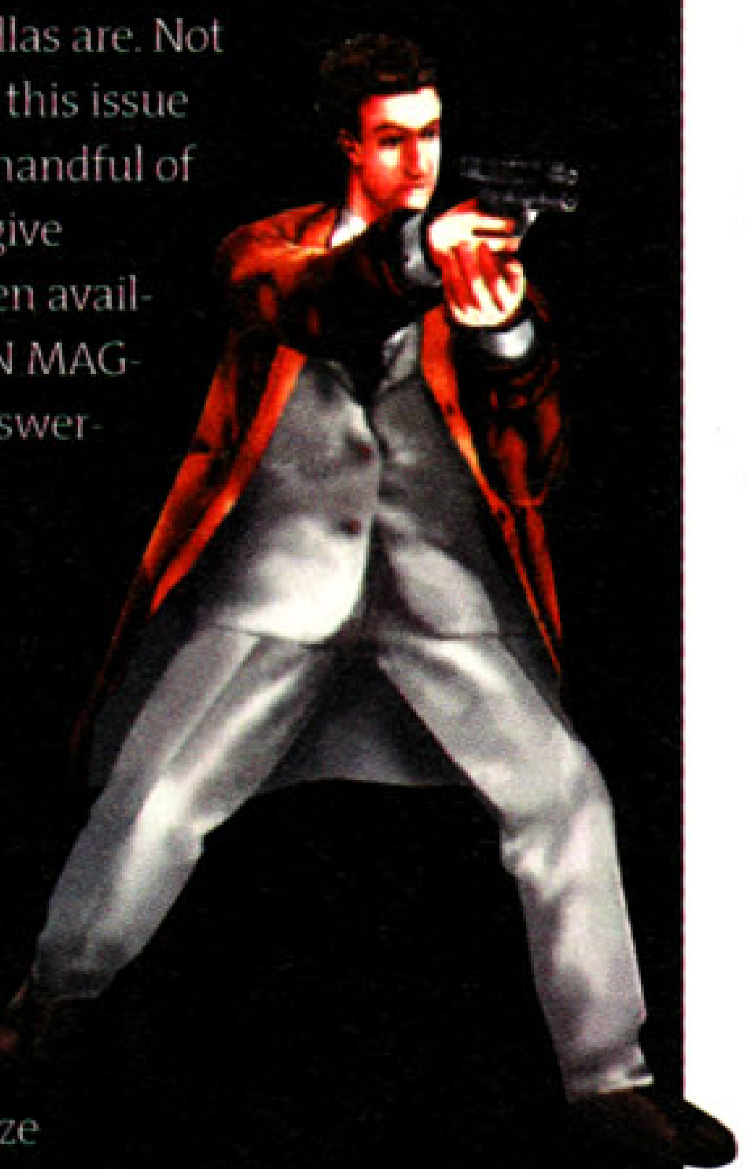
Virtua Fighter 3 is going to be the new yardstick - Sega have pretty much got their Model 2 conversions down to a fine art now (see Last Bronx), but Model 3 remains an unknown quantity. Sega of America in particular have been pretty bullish that VF3 *is* still coming, cart or not, and let's hope it is. If Model 3 games can't make it to Saturn where does that leave AM2's home games?



Last Bronx: an ace Model 2 conversion.

Competition

Win
A House of the Dead T-Shirt!



WHAT A SWELL BUNCH OF GUYS those AM1 fellas are. Not only did they agree to an EXCLUSIVE interview this issue (check out page 58) but they've also given us a handful of ultra rare House of the Dead promo t-shirts to give away. These much sought after items aren't even available in Japanese game stores but SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE readers can get their mitts on one by answering this oh-so easy question:

What was the name of AM1's last light gun game?
(hint: read the interview!)

If you think you know the answer, send your entry to the usual address and mark them GRATEFUL DEAD. Correct answers will be drawn at random and each winner will receive a nifty House of the Dead t-shirt. One size fits all. Entries to reach us no later than 26th September 1997.





New Game

Traveller's Tales



"Of course in the old days, sonny, I'd have been a 2D stick figure y'know!"



Atlantis offers players an intriguing storyline coupled with some smooth 3D graphics.

ALTHOUGH CRYO ARE KNOWN FOR their lush pre-rendered visuals and puzzle-packed adventures, this respected French development house has been a little quiet of late. In fact the last time they released a Saturn title was when Sega's machine played host to Myst, essentially a picture postcard storybook complete with enigmatic point 'n' click storyline. While not exactly a massive success, Cryo have stuck to their particular style of gaming, producing Lost Eden for PC CD-ROM and now Atlantis: The Lost Tales.

Set in the fabled pre-sunken continent itself, players find themselves cast in the role of Seth, a young hero who discovers a centuries old mystery that takes him on an adventure beyond belief. With such an ambitious plot, it's encouraging to see that Cryo have utilised a new game engine for the latest release, dumping the basic play mechanics of Myst for the power of OMNI-3D! This immersive technology enables players to fully explore Atlantis' 100 chapters and provides a panoramic 360 degree first person view on both the vertical and horizontal axes. Coupled with motion captured animation, 50 interactive characters, 3D sound and over 30 hours of gaming, Cryo are confident that Atlantis: The Lost Tales will be a Saturn scorcher. The graphics are already looking most impressive, and we'll hopefully have reviewable code next issue.

"Cryo have utilised a new game engine for Atlantis... witness the power of OMNI-3D!"



HMV CHARTS

Week Ending June 27th

KNOW HMV · KNOW GAMES

Send us your top ten games and you could be mentioned in these hallowed pages! If the luck of the Irish is with you, there could also be a free Saturn game up for grabs! Post your choices to READER CHARTS at the usual address. Congrats this month go to James Mumby of Scarborough. Well done mate!

	HMV CHARTS		READER CHARTS		SEGA PARK CHARTS
1	King of Fighters '95	1	Fighters MegaMix	1	House of the Dead
2	Fighters MegaMix	2	Tomb Raider	2	GTI Club
3	Manx TT	3	Sega Rally	3	Virtua Striker 2
4	FIFA '97	4	Worldwide Soccer '97	4	Scud Race
5	Shining the Holy Ark	5	Virtua Fighter 2	5	Tekken 3
6	Saturn Bomberman	6	Virtua Cop 2	6	Wave Runner
7	Virtua Cop 2	7	WipEout	7	Virtua Cop 2
8	Die Hard Arcade	8	NiGHTS	8	Daytona USA
9	Tomb Raider	9	Die Hard Arcade	9	X-Men vs Street Fighter
10	Dark Savior	10	Destruction Derby	10	Time Crisis

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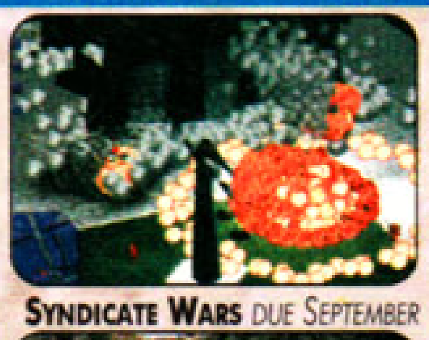
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COMING SOON ON THE SATURN



Jonah Lomu Rugby due September



Syndicate Wars due September



Mech Warrior 2 due Sept



Motocross Int'l due August



Micro Machines 3 due Sept



Duke Nukem 3D due September



Puzzle Fighter 2 due Aug



Panzer Dragoon Saga due Aug

Heartune Tamagotchi



Heartune is a unique creature that loves to be touched and kept clean. Heartune is usually very **happy** and bounces around the screen but it likes lots of attention. If **neglected,** it will become **moody** and **bored** and may even leave you! Don't panic though, all you have to do is **whistle** and **Heartune** will come bounding back. **Heartune** can also tell the **future!** The older it gets the **wiser** it becomes and the more **powerful** its fortune-telling abilities. It can tell your lucky number, colour and lucky item for the day and **tomorrow's fortune**. However, if you do not look after it properly it can sometimes turn into a monstrous little **Devil** which won't do as it is told! Colour and shape may vary. **£12.99**

SATURN GAMES

DARK SAVIOUR



BUBBLE BOBBLE/RAINBOW



ACTUA GOLF



ALIEN TRILOGY



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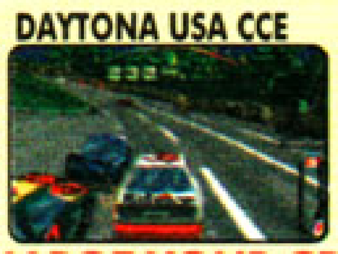
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DIE HARD TRILOGY & PREDATOR LIGHT GUN FOR JUST £49.99!

BOMBERMAN

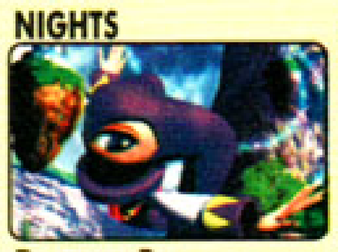


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MANX TT



FIFA '97



SOVIET STRIKE

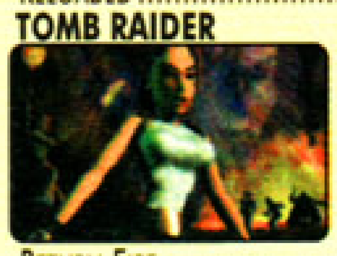


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TOMB RAIDER



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3. FIGHTERS MEGAMIX
4. WORLDWIDE SOCCER '97
5. SHINING IN THE HOLY ARK
6. MANX TT
7. THUNDERHAWK 2
8. TOMB RAIDER
9. DIE HARD TRILOGY
10. DAYTONA

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Fighters MegaMix: truly an ace game!



IF YOU CAN REMEMBER BACK TO issue #21, you'll know we put out a call across the whole country, searching for expert Fighters MegaMix players to compete in a national tournament. With some cool prizes up for grabs - namely subscriptions to SSM, huge Japanese arcade style joysticks and a custom made Fighters MegaMix jacket for the winner, we wanted the eight best MegaMix players there are... and we got 'em!

But where could the final of such a prestigious sporting event be held? The Las Vegas Hilton? The casino at Monaco? Or perhaps even one of the Manchester branches of Game? What the hell, let's go for the glamorous jet-set location : Game in Manchester!

So here we go then. The dust has settled, and it's result time. The four people who managed to embarrass themselves by losing in the first round were Scott Kenley, Jaime Thompson, Rick Newman and Luke Ford. Bad luck guys, hope you enjoyed your day in Manchester (cough), even though you'll all go down in history as 'those four crap blokes who lost in the first round'. Never mind.

Now the semi finals. Usually the time for the German competitors to beat the plucky English players in a tense penalty shoot-out. But not today, because this wasn't a football match. And there weren't any Germans there. Still, that didn't stop Lee 'scary' Stulock and Hiten Shah from keeping the side up and gallantly failing to reach the final.

The unfortunate position of runner-up went to Rashid Hussain, although the plucky little chap was consoled with a cool Japanese mega joystick! Rashid's conqueror, and the ultimate MegaMix warrior, goes by the name of Neil Thompson - which isn't a very scary name for a mighty warrior, but he's a damn fine MegaMix player all the same. Nice one Neil, congratulations and all that, now you can call yourself Neil Thompson - MegaMix Warlord of Ultimate Destruction.

Save cash

THE HIGHEST RATED RPG OF recent times is Team Sonic's brilliant Shining the Holy Ark - a brilliant mixture of stunning 3D, anime Japanese artwork and a huge involving quest. It truly is a cosmic release of unprecendented proportions and if you're a Saturn fan of ANY description we recommend you check it out.

Even non-RPG fans should take a look at Holy Ark: it manages to bridge the gap between adventuring and arcade-style gameplay and appeal to just about any one - hence the stunning review mark of 93% awarded to the game a few issues ago.



Now, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE in association with Sega and Game stores can offer you Shining the Holy Ark at a discounted price! That's right: the coupon on the right entitles you to a full fiver off one of the deepest, most involving videogames we've played in recent times. Don't delay: go for it today!

GAME

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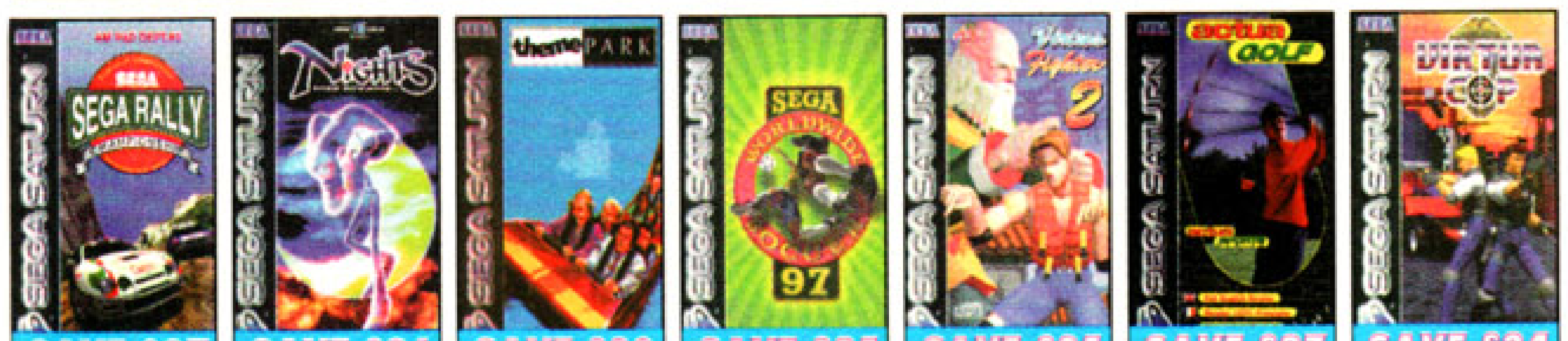
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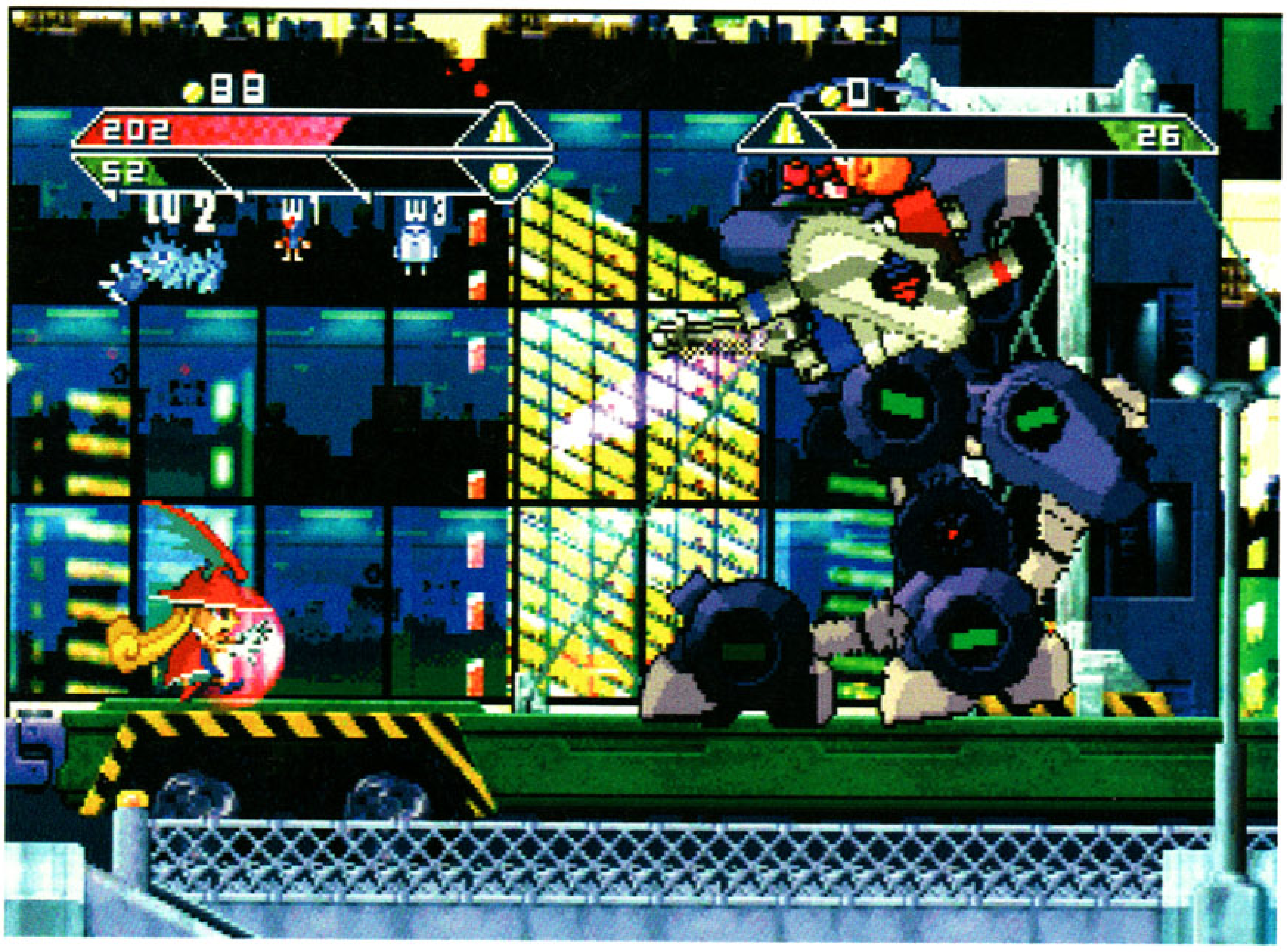
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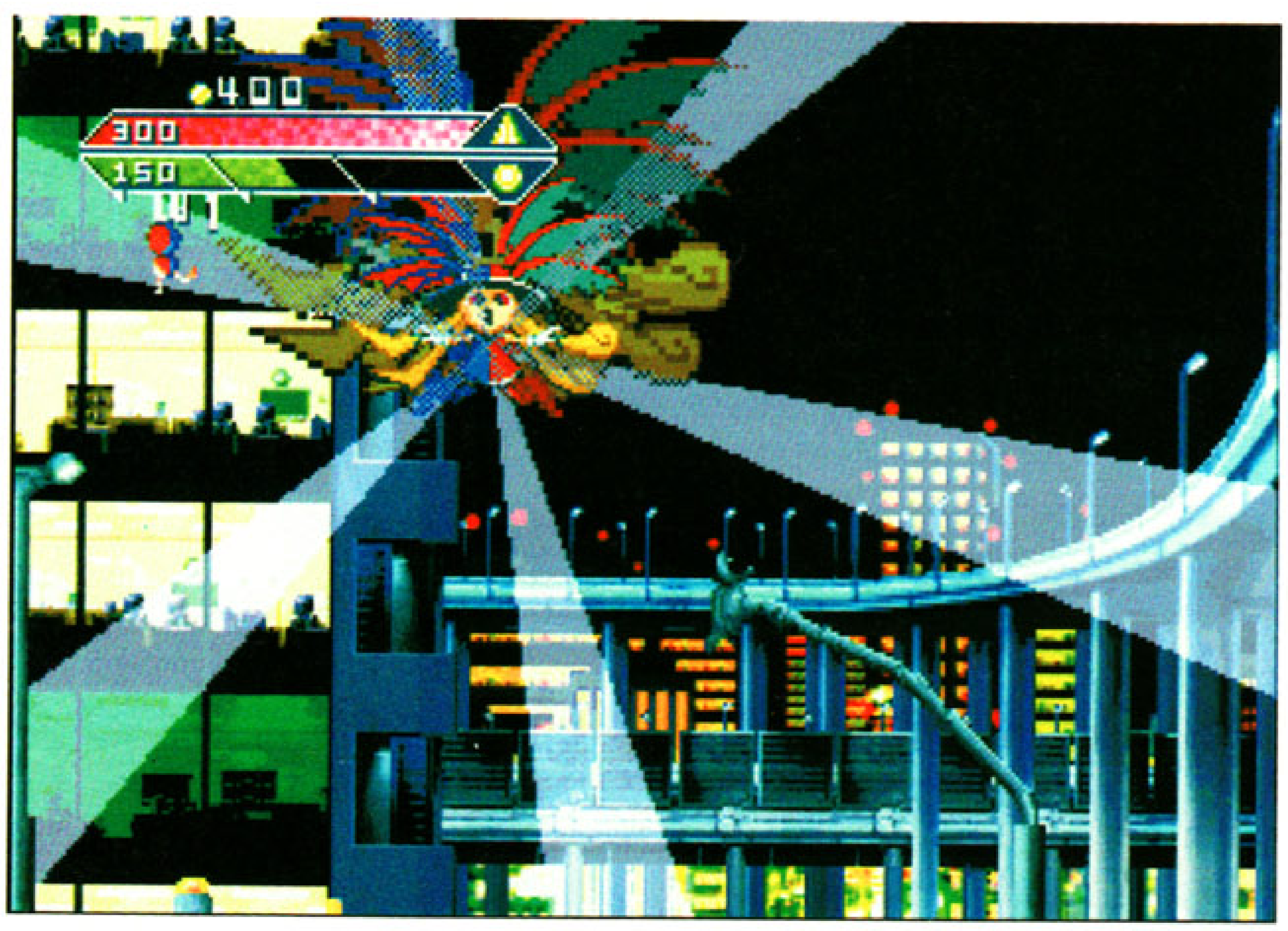


Meet Shina Nera Shina, the heroine of Silhouette Mirage.

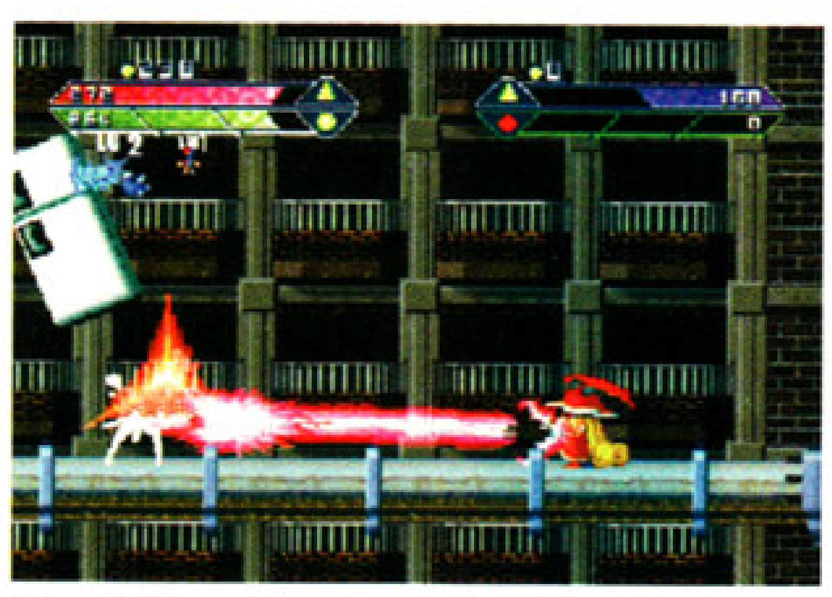
STOP THE PRESS! JUST AS SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE was due to be shipped off to our printers, we received a demo disc of Treasure's amazing 2D platformer, the long-awaited Silhouette Mirage. Always one to bring you the latest Saturn coverage, we've blasted through this awesome side-scrolling adventure and discovered that the same team that brought you Gunstar Heroes, Dynamite Heady and Guardian Heroes are still as dynamic as ever.

Silhouette Mirage takes place in a world that is being split in two by an ancient evil force. The result is one dimension of silhouettes and the other a world of mirages. Only the game's hero, Shina Nera Shina, has the ability to travel between these twinned worlds and save both of them from destruction. After an extensive playtest, it's safe to say that Silhouette Mirage is a surreal and bizarre title that takes the familiar platform genre and gives it a number of new spins. As with the Grandia coverage this month, it's also obvious that this demo disc offers a brief taster of yet another incredible Saturn title waiting in the wings. With a release date set for early September, the Japanese are already going ape for what could be Treasure's last Saturn outing. As far as a UK release goes, Sega Europe actually have no intention of unleashing this awesome title over here. Needless to say SSM will pull out all the stops to ensure this masterpiece DOES arrive on these shores.





Amazing lighting effects, pyrotechnic special moves and bizarre characters inhabit this world.



Forget the spider, shoot the fridge! The fridge!



Will Silhouette Mirage reach the UK. Hmm...

News in Brief

DETAILS ON SEGA WORLDWIDE Soccer '98 are now emerging. We can confirm that as well as the present International teams, national clubs are also being included. Taking centrestage is the English Premiership, which features teams and players from the new season. French and Spanish leagues are also representated. Other than that, expect better gameplay, more intelligent goalies and new stadia. Coming in October, this should be awesome and we'll have ACE coverage soon.

Saturn games at £19.99? Indeed. Certain retailers are now receiving selected Sega games to sell at just twenty quid. And it isn't just any old tat either - Athlete Kings (91%) and Sega Worldwide Soccer '97 (94%) are on offer. Check out the likes of Game, EB and DIxons and shop around for the best deals...

After what seems like decades of delay, Codemasters have finally thrown in the towel and admitted that development of Micro Machines V3 has been halted. There's little denying that this is another bitter blow against the Saturn from the third-party developers.

Sega have bought the development house Adeline, responsible for the stunning Little Big Adventure and its topping sequel. The company are becoming developers for the PC and the new Sega console. The name of the firm has also changed, from Adeline to the equally odd No Cliche. This company's commitment to both quality and originality make it an excellent addition to the Sega stable and we wouldn't be surprised to see more celebrity signings in the near future.

Sega have confirmed that 3DFX technology will DEFINITELY not be in the new Saturn follow-up machine. Internet rumours already point to the next generation of PowerVR chip, but the truth of the matter is probably far more impressive...

Despite Konami's refusal to release any Saturn product in the UK, the Japanese division remains very active. Salamander Deluxe Pack is their latest release (and it's ace) whilst classic PlayStation titles such as Suikoden, Castlevania and perhaps the forthcoming Metal Gear Solid are also planned for Saturndom.

New Game

Upgrade Kart







FORMULA KARTS IS GETTING READY to sprint out from the garages at Manic Media Productions, and go wheel-to-wheel with the Saturn's other cool racers - Touring Car and Sonic R, both of which are due out later this year. So can Formula Kart reach pole position? Well, it looks like it has a good chance because, as the name suggests, the game allows players to race turbo-charged go-karts!

Formula Karts features a full 3D polygon environment, as is the rule these days, and the game's designers are hoping to keep everything moving at a smooth 25 frames per second - which might be tough considering the ambitious scenery and racing action, and also the fact that they plan to include a split-screen two-player mode! The finished game will also include eight different tracks, giving Formula Karts an edge over its competition, and offering players a huge challenge.

Although still quite far from complete, it's already obvious that the game's coders are trying to produce a title that stands out from the crowded field of Saturn race games. With a bit of luck though, this could be a winner Stay tuned for further kart-based news.



Go-kart, go kart, go kart, GO!

Arcade Action!



Saturn owners have always known that Sega's machine is not only a 32-bit powerhouse but is also the choice platform for arcade perfect conversions. For those individuals who spend far too many hours pumping cash into the latest arcade machines, Sega have just the place for you to visit.

There are already a number of Sega Parks and amusement centres around the country with the promise of more to open. Unlike dimly lit arcades of yesteryear, these parks offer visitors of all ages loads of interactive entertainment ranging from the state-of-the-art Virtual Reality rides to such coin-guzzlers as Virtua Fighter 3 and Scud Race. We'll be bringing you more Sega Park features in forthcoming issues and keeping you up-to-date with all the latest arcade releases.

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SEGA Touring Car Championship



Unbelievable! That's the word to describe Touring Car. Unbelievable that Sega have managed to procure another form of motor sport to trivialise into a five minute arcade experience. And guess what, we've just received a 50% complete Saturn version of AM Annex's ultra-realistic racer and it is awesome! LEE NUTTER reports.





From the look of these shots. it could well be a Rally beater!

Sega Touring Car Championship hit the arcades pretty hard upon its release last year and was hailed as the true successor to Sega Rally. Indeed many of the personnel responsible for the latter were recruited to the newly formed AM Annex, creators of Touring Car. The coin-op pushed the capabilities of the Model 2B board to its limits, surpassing Rally in terms of increased realism and unrivalled graphical prowess. A Saturn version seemed unlikely, given that the coin-op wouldn't look out of place alongside a Model 3 racer. Nevertheless, work on the project was undertaken by the team responsible for the often maligned but truly incredible Virtual On conversion. >>




OPEL
TEAM JOEST
PEL
BÄUMLER
men's fashion
BOSCH




It's astonishing that this shot has been taken from the in-game graphics.



Touring Car is going to be huge when it's released, hopefully by November.

When using the analogue pad Touring Car is already one of the most satisfying driving games around, it's going to be a classic!

>> After an agonising few months of hearing nothing, finally a very early version of the highly-anticipated racer was debuted at the recent E3 show in Atlanta, impressing all who saw it. After bringing our readers the exclusive first pictures in last month's packed issue, this month we've managed to exclusively get hold of a more recent 50% complete version of the game and it is incredible. Demonstrating new tricks never seen before in a Saturn racer and with the promise of some ground-breaking new features, a Sega Rally beater may not be the impossibility we thought only a few weeks ago. Don't believe me? Well check out the rolling footage of the Saturn version of Touring Car on this month's awesome demo disc, but bear in mind that's from a version of the game earlier in development than the focus of this feature.





The presentation of Touring Car is already looking superb, as seen here in the vehicle select screen.



The Toyota Supra looks very similar to Rally's Celica, right down to the sponsoring.

SO WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Sega Touring Car Championship is based on the real-life exploits of the Touring Car series, whereby high-speed production cars are driven at ridiculous speeds around a series of gruelling circuits with spectacular fender-bending crashes ensuing. The same is true of the game.

Players begin by being afforded the choice of one of four production vehicles (detailed elsewhere in this feature) and the usual manual or automatic transmission. Then it's down to business, as players take to the tarmac for a one-off qualifying lap around the first circuit, determining their position on the grid formation. Precision driving is required for players wanting pole position, with tenths of a second separating the top eight cars. Then it's on to the race proper where four teams, each comprising of two identical cars, battle it out across three race tracks of increasing complexity. However, whilst track position is important, success is derived from attaining the best overall time for the three circuits. Once players have reached this level of skill, a fourth secret track becomes available for the final race of the season. Known as the Urban Course, players race through the narrow city streets at break-neck speeds. And in similar fashion to the Lakeside Course of Sega Rally, it's rock hard.



The detail in the huge 3D architecture is truly amazing. We can hardly wait!







Quite why there is a pit lane is beyond me, considering the vehicles don't sustain any battle damage. Nevertheless, the panoramic virtual camera gives players an excellent view of the car.





Whilst assisting in taking these pictures, Rich demonstrates his lack of driving prowess by smashing into other vehicles, though later claiming it was a purposeful act to get spectacular shots. Hmm...

JUST LIKE REAL LIFE

As with the development team's previous arcade exploits, namely the fantastic Sega Rally Championship and Manx TT Superbike, Sega Touring Car Championship is a game which focusses predominantly on realism, clearly a priority for the team. From the moment the project was first conceptualised, the team undertook a great deal of research into the sport. Most of the team at some point drove a touring car for themselves to get a good feel of the handling characteristics of the vehicles, and received a great deal of technical input from top Japanese drivers, not that we've ever heard of any. As such, Touring Car is about as realistic a driving experience as players could possibly hope for, without the boring elements of a full simulation game.

From a gameplay point of view, the realistic handling is very tricky to get to grips with, though it's made much simpler with use of the analogue controller. Each of the cars exhibit large amounts of Sega Rally-style oversteer, with newcomers to the game spending much of their time ricocheting from one side of the track to the other. Likewise braking is an equally hazardous experience, with subtlety being the key to success. Slam on the brakes at top whack and the car flips out wildly, whereas dabbing the brakes allows for more controlled movements, allowing players to shave precious fractions of a second off their lap times. Naturally this means Touring Car has a far steeper learning curve than most other driving games you may care to mention, but ultimately makes mastering the game a more satisfying experience. Or so they tell me.

Adding further to the realism of the proceedings, each of the vehicles are accurate representations of their real-life coun-



Even the blinkin' replay mode is in there, giving players a panoramic view of their car speeding around the circuits.



Using the analogue controller makes the sharp turns a tad easier to negotiate.





The tough computer AI makes Touring Car a more fiercely competitive game than Rally, being more akin to Daytona.

COMING SOON

ALFA ROMEO 155 V6 Ti

Engine Capacity: 2499cc
Cylinders: V6
Power Output: 450bhp at 11700rpm
Transmission: 6 Speed / 4 Wheel Drive











terparts, with the AM Annex team receiving guidance from the respective car manufacturers on the dynamics of their machines. Even the decorative advertising stickers which adorn the cars are faithfully replicated in the game, something the original programming team went to great lengths to ensure.

A GRAPHICAL TOUR DE FORCE, INDEED

It is perhaps odd, that despite developers becoming increasingly familiar with the difficult Saturn hardware, the 18-month-old Sega Rally remains unsurpassed in terms of visual prowess. Even the more recent Daytona CCE using an advanced version of the Rally engine, failed to reach the heady heights achieved by the former title. So given the huge amount of detail in the Touring Car coin-op, with some massive 3D architecture adorning each circuit, we had our doubts as to how well the Saturn could replicate the eye candy of the coin-op. However, such doubts were quickly cast aside when we received the recent version of Touring Car, as even at this mid-way point in its development cycle, the quality of the visuals manage to surpass those of Sega Rally.

For starters, each of the four gruelling circuits are staggeringly detailed versions of their arcade counterparts, perfectly replicated onto the Saturn and featuring all of the densely packed track side scenery of the coin-op, in contrast to the rather sparse looking Sega Rally. Even the most basic Country Course features huge grandstands and the like, without any of the ugly clipping problems incurred by other Saturn racers. In fact, the clipping is of the highest standard ever, with the draw distance being so far into the horizon it's no longer an issue.

Likewise each of the cars have been superbly crafted, with each of the boxy vehicles featuring an incredible amount of detail on their bodywork. Yet more remarkable however, is that the enemy cars are equally as detailed as your own, featuring all the correct sponsoring and so forth and being virtually indistinguishable. They're that good.

Best of all, is the news that the Saturn version of Touring will definitely feature the processor-intensive rear-view mirror, a first for a Saturn racer. This feature was unfortunately absent from the awesome Sega Rally conversion, leaving players frantically weaving the track about to prevent enemy drones from overtaking. Given the tough computer AI in Touring Car, the rear-view mirror really is more of a necessity than a luxury and as such the CS team are programming it in as we speak, with only a rectangular box present in the version we've received.

AMG MERCEDES C-CLASS

Engine Capacity: 2499cc
Cylinders: V6
Power Output: 500bhp at 11500rpm
Transmission: 6 Speed / Rear Wheel Drive



The extra course becomes available to players with the best overall time.











It looks as though the CS team's conversion is going to be the closest yet!

HOW'S IT DIFFERENT?

Comparisons with the epoch-making Sega Rally are inevitable, given that Rally is the yardstick by which all other console racers are generally measured. As such, even at this early stage in development, Sega Touring Car Championship shows signs of surpassing the landmark Rally. The first thing players notice when playing Touring Car, is that the whole game shifts at an incredible rate, making Sega Rally appear like a Sunday afternoon jaunt in the country. In fact, the top speeds attained by the



It's a little known fact that AM Annex are actually working on Sega Rally 2.



The tunnel sections of the extra course allow players little margin for error.





If the CS team get the frame rate up, a Sega Rally beater seems likely.









OPEL CALIBRE V6
Engine Capacity: 2498cc
Cylinders: V6
Power Output: 500bhp at 11650rpm
Transmission: 6 Speed / 4 Wheel Drive





impressive range of production vehicles are more akin to those of Daytona USA, with the stunning scenery whizzing by at approximately a million miles per hour.

One of the few disappointing aspects of Sega Rally was that the computer drones followed the same predetermined route throughout the game and were unable to digress from it. Not so with Touring Car, as the CS team have programmed each of the CPU vehicles with a high level of artificial intelligence, reacting realistically not only to the twists and turns of the circuit but to the remaining competitors. This makes the racing more realistic and fiercely competitive than that of Rally, with players spending much of their time caught in the middle of the pack, jostling for position and invariably resulting in a multiple-car pile-up.

OO, AH TOURING CAR
Slightly disappointing in the recent conversion of Manx TT, aside from the God-awful music, was the absence of the meaty sound effects which accompanied the arcade version of the game. Not so with Touring Car. As players of the coin-op will testify, Touring Car featured some incredible rumbling engine noises sampled from the actual vehicles, which were blasted into virtually every orifice through strategically placed speakers around the cabinet. Obviously, whilst not quite as impressive when playing on a 14" television, the sampled engine noises in the Saturn version of the game are superb, giving it a good dose of added realism. Likewise the music numbers of Touring Car are top-notch, with AM Annex recruiting hardcore techno outfit Avex Trax to do the musical honours, resulting in a cool thumping-techno soundtrack and Gina G-esque vocals.

WHAT MORE MUST BE ADDED?
The CS team have their work cut out in bringing Touring Car to the Saturn, but given their previous Virtual On conversion, we're confident of a top-notch conversion. However, as previously stated, the version of the game we've taken delivery of is a mere 50% complete, with work set to continue until as late as October with a Christmas release in mind.

First and foremost on their list of priorities is to sort out the rather lacklustre frame rate. At present, it's lying around the 20fps mark, but the team are confident at being able to get that to a Rally standard of 30fps. In addition, there's a fair bit of glitching which has yet to be addressed, though again, the team don't foresee any problems in doing so.

Most intriguing of all are the all-new Saturn-specific features the team are keen to add. We've already had a taste of them in the version of the game we've received, alas a violent and tear-inducing form of genital torture has been promised to any member of the SSM team who reveal such secrets. So for the time being, our lips are sealed. However, those expecting extra vehicles, tracks and a ghost mode shouldn't be disappointed. Am I allowed to say that?

This is one title that SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE intends to follow very closely indeed over the coming months, so rest assured that more details on this awesome racer shall be forthcoming in a future issue of this fine publication.

TOYOTA SUPRA
Engine Capacity: 1998cc
Cylinders: V6
Power Output: 480bhp at 6800rpm
Transmission: 6Speed / Front Wheel Drive





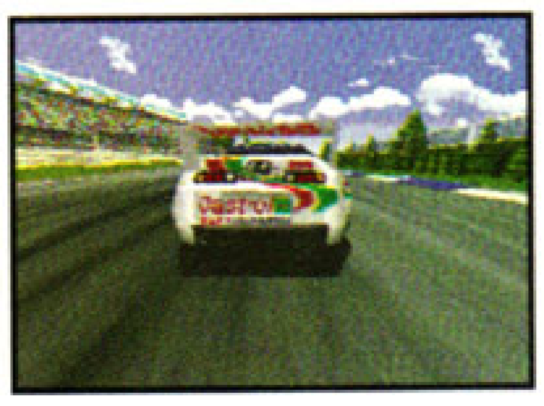
The detail in the enemy drones is far beyond that of any other Saturn racer.





AM Annex managed to get the balance between realism and fun just right.







Grandia





With amazingly detailed backdrops, stunning battle sequences and a gripping storyline, GameArts' Grandia looks set to be the most amazing Saturn RPG ever!

As possibly the most eagerly anticipated Saturn RPG ever, Grandia has been in development for nearly three years. With an imminent Japanese release, and the availability of an ultra rare demo disc, MATT YEO reveals the potential of GameArts' epic adventure.

There are few announcements in the past 12 months that have shaken the video games industry as much as the creation of GD NET or Game Designers Network. The brainchild of ESP (Entertainment Software Publishing) and company President Youichi Miyaji, GD NET is essentially a consortium of some of the most influential and creative Japanese software houses in existence. Comprising a number of major names, such as Quintet, GameArts and Treasure, the company's main aim is to develop diverse and mature video games, giving developers the tools and finance they need to compete with larger more aggressive companies. Fortunately for Saturn owners, these developers have a definite Sega bias and a number of ambitious titles are already in the works including Solo Crisis, Lunar: Silver Star Story and the epic fantasy adventure that is Grandia.

MASTERS OF THE GAME

With a Japanese release date creeping ever closer, GameArts are hard at work putting the finishing touches to what looks set to be the company's most impressive title so far. Fortunately, Grandia's development team are no strangers when it comes to creating complex 3D environ-







Although the Grandia demo disc is packed with Japanese text and speech, it's still possible for Western players to wander around and get a feel for the game.



Fiina unleashes a bubbling magical attack against a giant lava squid!

Grandia has a complex and extremely character driven pplot that typically features a hapless hero embarking on a sprawling quest.

ments as their early efforts so clearly show. Years ago, GameArts released the polygon-packed Mega CD shoot 'em up Silpheed and in 1996 tackled their first Saturn title, the robot blaster Gun Griffon. But when it comes to innovation and sheer creative genius, Grandia must be seen to be believed. UK Saturn owners have been quite lucky in recent months, with a deluge of quality RPGs reachieving the translation treatment. Dark Savior, Shining the Holy Ark and Dragon Force have all achieved critical acclaim with their unique play mechanics, engaging story lines and spectacular graphical effects. Sega Europe have already announced their intention to release Grandia in the UK but the game's extensive Japanese text and sampled speech will result in this 3D masterpiece arriving over here in early '98.

Japanese gamers who have been waiting for Grandia with bated breath were recently given the chance to get their hands on an exclusive demo of the game, but copies of the disc were extremely limited. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has managed to obtain this prized item (importers are already charging extortionate prices for the Grandia demo) and we've been blown away by the quality of GameArts' creation. As with many Japanese RPGs, the game has a complex and extremely character driven plot that typically features a hapless hero embarking on a sprawling quest and discovering his true destiny. Here's what we've managed to discover so far:



Justin and Sue explore Parm Town's harbour in search of lost artifacts.

ONCE UPON A TIME...

Justin is a 14 year old boy living in Parm, a port town. Although it is currently the age of industrial revolution, he grew up during the golden age of exploration when ships navigated across the world and where fabulous ocean voyages passed new continents. Whenever, he looks at his "Spirit Stone", a keepsake of his father's, he is carried away by dreams of adventure in an ancient continent known only as "Enjewel".

Then on one fateful day, he receives an invitation to go on a field trip to some ancient "Salto" ruins and, accompanied by several childhood friends, he cheerfully sets off. At the ruins, the group discovers a huge cavern but the local militia prevent them from entering. However, slipping pass the security guards they sneak in. Whilst walking around this cavern complex they come across a room which had been constructed unlike the others. As Justin reaches the centre



Parm Town is entering a new industrial age, with factories and an extensive rail network attracting visitors from all over the land.

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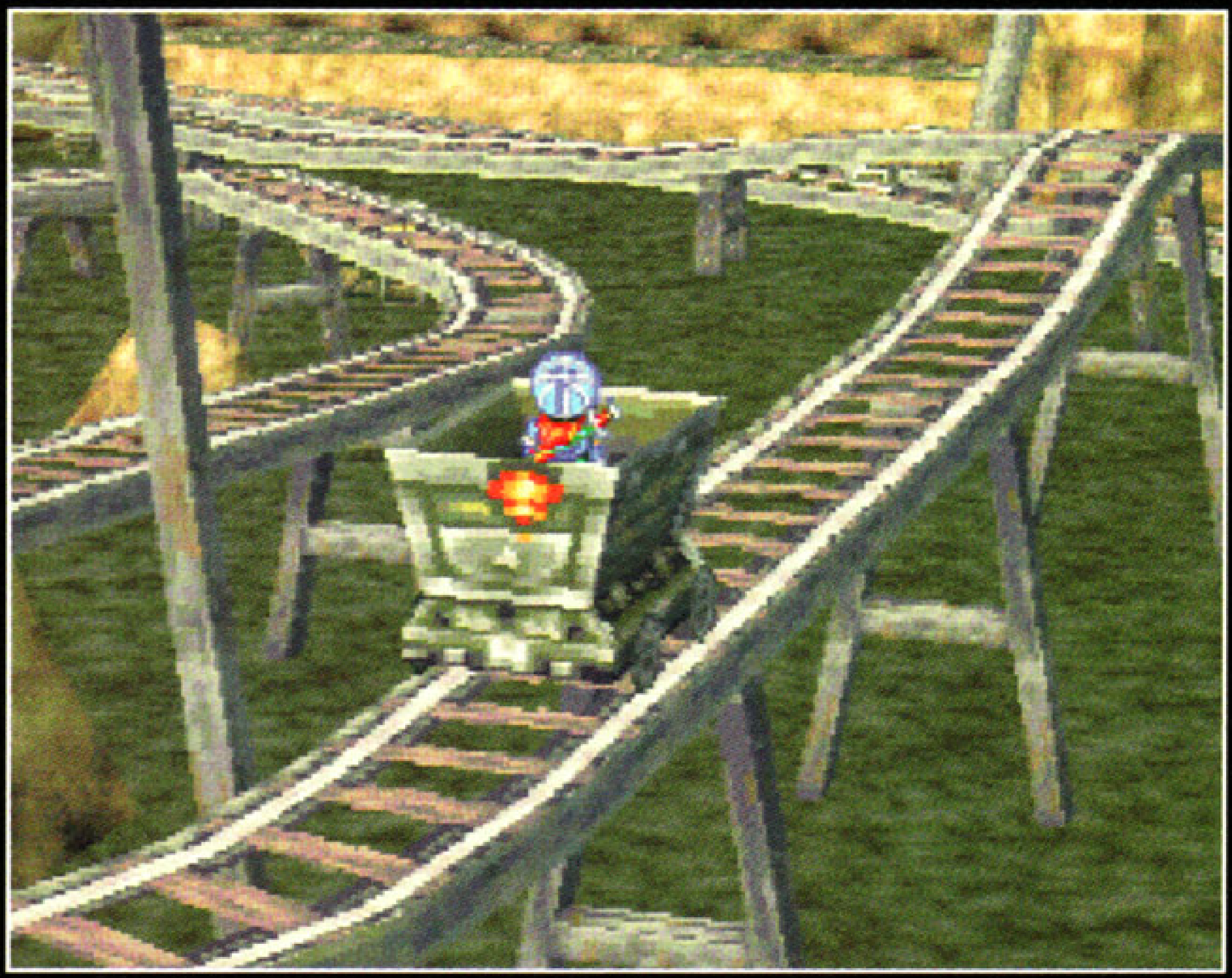


Grandia's magical attacks are a wonder to behold. From fiery infernos to chilling ice assaults, this game has 'em all.

Inside the deserted castle, Justin realises he may have taken a wrong turn after all...



Taking a leaf out of Dark Savior's book, Grandia also features a cool mine cart level.



Wandering through a barren volcanic landscape, our heroes soon encounter rock trolls, vampire bats and ghosts before facing a giant tentacled monstrosity!

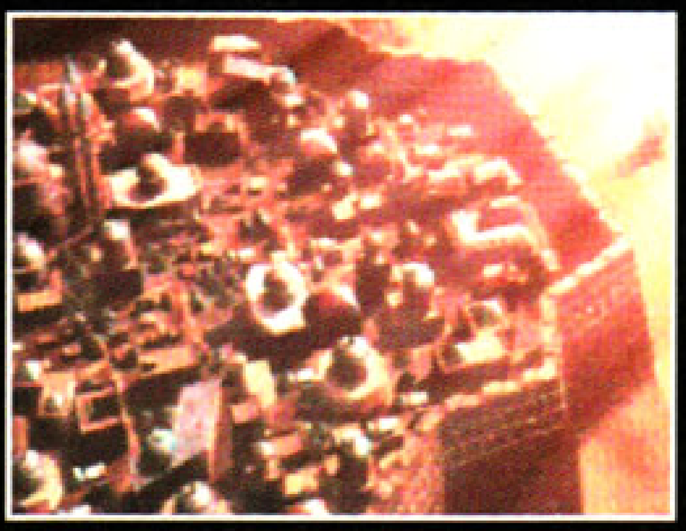


A commander in the Baal army, Riin joins the adventurers later in the game.

>> of this room, a kaleidoscopic light begins to emit from the Spirit Stone. From within that light a voice can be heard, a voice tempting Justin to the new continent. And with this message ringing in his head, his destiny will be altered forever...

SO WHAT'S ON THE DISC?

The demo disc we've obtained contains a number of cool features, with four fun-packed sections giving players a true taste of what to expect from the finished game. For starters there's the Exploration Mode which places adventurers at the start of the full game as Sue encounters Justin. After annoying the clientele of a local bar, our hero is thrown out on his ear before exploring Parm Town with the diminutive healer by his side. On the way, players encounter and talk to a number local villagers, enter various taverns and inns, discover a number of useful items and generally explore their 3D environment. By pressing the L and R shoulder buttons, players can rotate the camera angle and smoothly spin the incredibly detailed landscape around them. While this may at first seem to merely be a clever graphical trick, this feature soon reveals its true function as many objects, enemies and entrances are concealed and only revealed by shifting your viewpoint. A full explanation is shown in the screenshot sequence below.



Grandia's intro is incredibly cool...



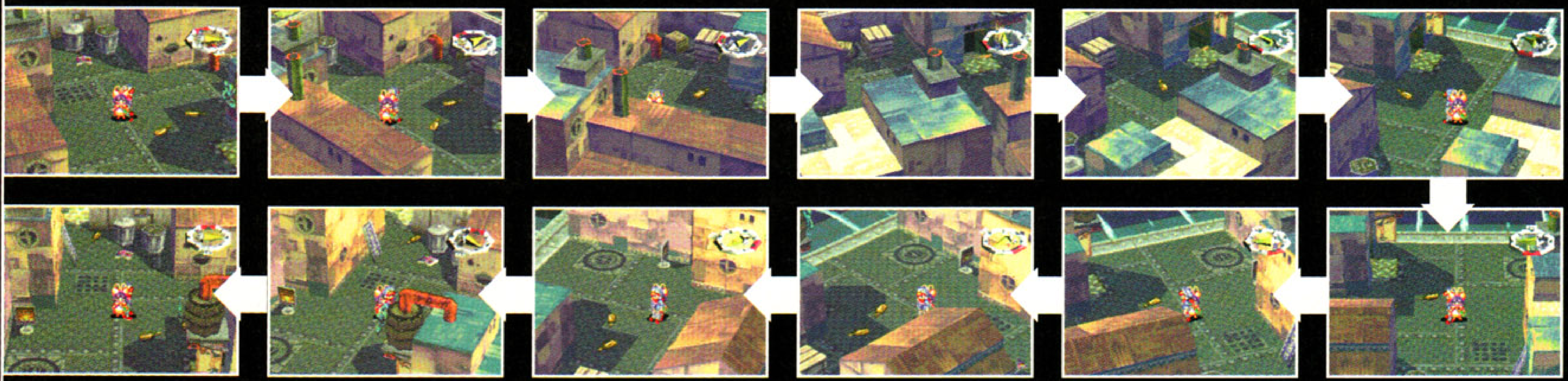
...and sets the gritty tone to come.

LIGHTING EFFECTS, CAMERA ANGLES... ACTION!

If a stroll through suburbia isn't action-packed enough for you, the Combat Mode offers players the opportunity to progress further into the game and battle a number of evil creatures. Wandering through a barren volcanic landscape, our heroes soon encounter rock trolls, vampire bats and ghosts before facing the might of a giant tentacled monstrosity. As in many RPGs, combat is turn based with players having the option to attack using traditional, defend themselves, heal wounds, retreat and employ magical weapons. As these screenshots show, these mystical assaults are visually impressive with amazing lighting effects and cause massive damage. However, Grandia's turn based combat is unique in that players are also capable of controlling

EXPLORE GRANDIA'S WORLDS WITH 360 DEGREES OF ROTATION!

The following pictures should give you a clear idea of just how smooth and detailed Grandia's 3D landscapes are. By utilising the joypad's shoulder buttons, players can utilise this handy function to discover hidden doors and special items as well as avoiding traps and nasty surprises.



It's essential for players to pan around levels in order to locate items and entrances that may be obscured by buildings and scenery. Oh, and by the way, there's no glitching or pop-up whatsoever.

THERE IS ANOTHER...

While Grandia's rich 3D environments and cool characters are certainly impressive, the game's music also deserves some special coverage. To ensure a high quality audio content, GameArts have employed the talents of George Lucas' Skywalker Sound facility and Sound Producer Tom Meyers. As a division of Lucas Digital, Skywalker Sound are usually responsible for editing film scores and providing state-of-the-art sound facility's for orchestral soundtrack recordings. Tom Meyers by the way has also been involved in the mastering of such Hollywood blockbuster scores as Terminator 2 and Mission: Impossible. From the Grandia demo, it's obvious that GameArts have made an inspired choice when it comes to selecting their development partners, as the game's music and audio effects are simply stunning. From the all most Seventies theme tune to be heard on the demo movie selection screen to the cheeky Addam's Family inspired music on the haunted house stage, there's a jingle for every occasion.

SKYWALKER SOUND

A DIVISION OF LUCAS DIGITAL LTD.



The mysterious Guardians of Enjewel...



...and the enemy's invincible war fleet.

more than one character at once, enabling two or more fighters to attack the same target simultaneously. To limit the number of attacks and moves during combat, there's a handy gauge located in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen showing each character's status. Players watch each character's icon move along the bar as it indicates when a warrior may take their next combat turn and when enemy characters are about to attack.

In addition to the two main game options, the demo disc also includes a number of full screen rendered sequences (including the full intro minus Japanese text), mini-movies of later levels (wait until you see the spooky haunted house stage) and main character descriptions. The mini-movies are particularly impressive, showing such highlights as mine car chase, Justin exploring a graveyard and the game's heroes exploring the mysterious Salto ruins.





Grandia's extreme landscapes add plenty of variety and scope for exploration.





The mini-movies are impressive, showing such highlights as mine car chase, Justin exploring a graveyard and the mysterious Salto ruins

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

There's no denying that Grandia's greatest feature are its graphically detailed and amazingly interactive 3D backgrounds. GameArts pride themselves on their powerful polygon handling abilities and the sheer size and scope of Grandia's levels are a perfect showcase for their talents. Placed side by side all the maps which make up this town cover a 10x10 screen area. That makes each town 10 times larger than the average RPG sprite-based town. The entire village is created in realtime with texture mapped polygons and it's not just the larger buildings and roads that are constructed from polygons.

Just about every item is a 3D object. For example, imagine a piece of fruit on a table. In a 2D RPG it's just a single sprite placed on a background picture. Quite often from this collection of dots it's not possible to determine exactly what it's supposed to be. But, in Grandia, this item would be constructed from polygons so it could be viewed from any angle.

Because the world is 3D, it's only natural to expect that characters should be capable of move freely within their environments. This means that the characters have sprite patterns in all eight directions. These hand-drawn character sprites aren't just capable of running either. They walk, run, crawl, climb, fight and even act with a surprising degree of humour. It's not surprising then that just the characters alone use 20,000 sprite cells and that it took two years to complete. Now that's what we call attention to detail!



The King has heard grim news of an ancient evil infesting the land of Enjewel.



In the demo disc's Combat Mode, players trek through a rugged lava-filled stage before battling a huge cyclops squid. To defeat the beast, Fiina prepares to unleash an ice blast.



Once a spell has been selected, players are required to choose which part of the creature's anatomy to target. Drain its energy reserves to destroy its tentacled limbs.

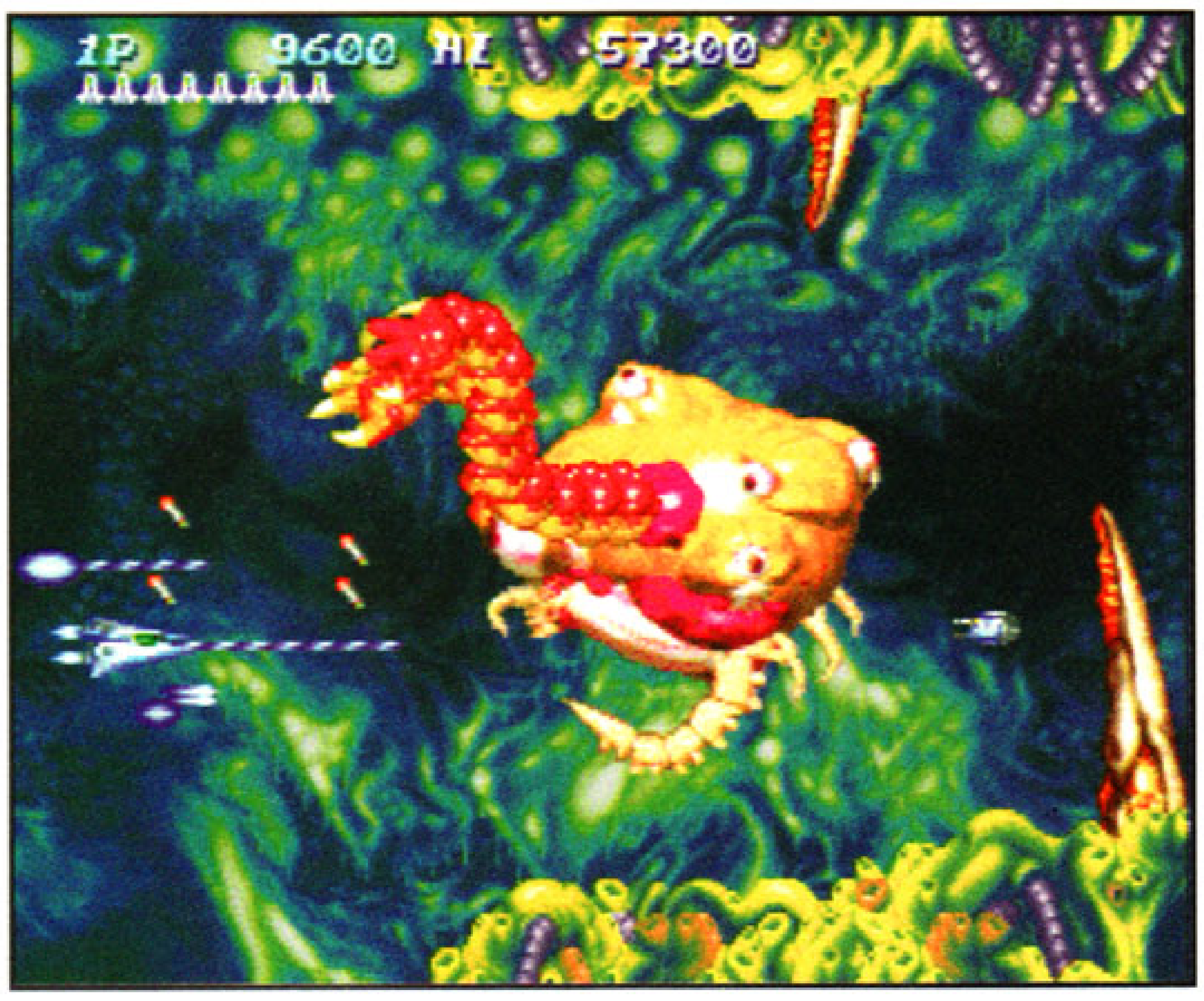


This powerful spell is completed with the creature's appendage being encased in solid ice. The block then shatters, draining nearly 200 energy points. Cool!



Salamader deluxe





A conversion of a little known, yet pretty cool blaster, Salamander 2 is something of a bonus addition to this retro pack which follows up the Gradius pack.





Konami have all but deserted the Sega Saturn... in the UK. Over in the Land of the Rising Sun, the famed company's commitment to our favourite machine remains as strong as ever. Want some proof? RICH LEADBETTER checked out their latest, a retro pack with a nineties edge...





The R-Type style battle against an alien armada is one of the coolest levels in the game that is Salamander 2!

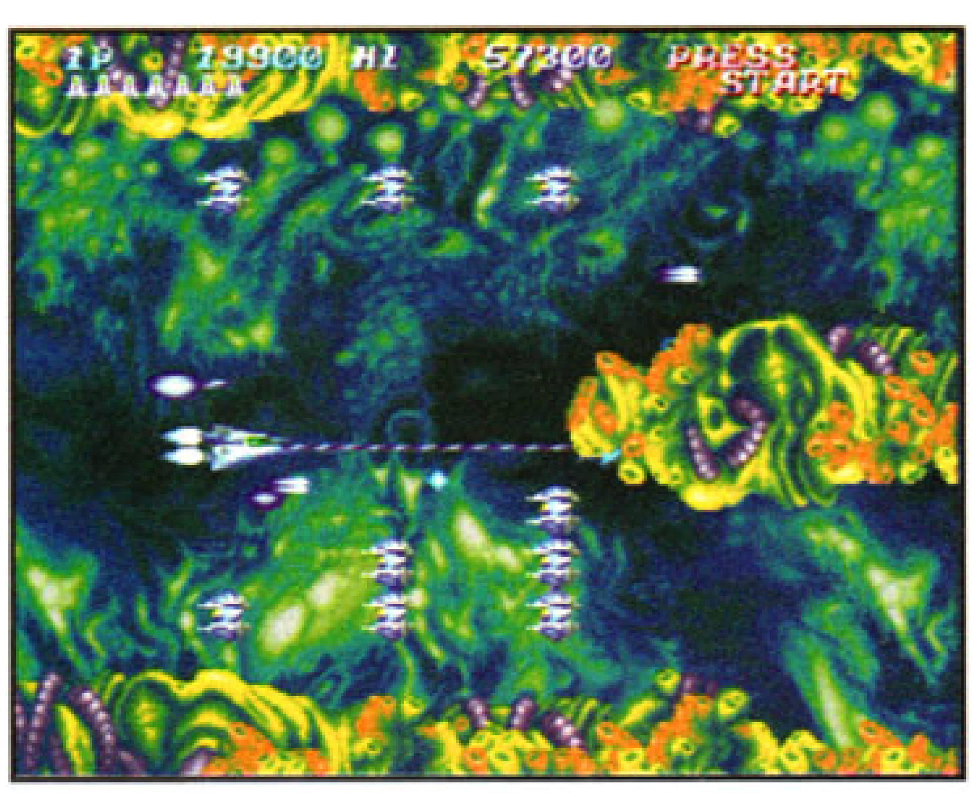
The next generation machines have more than enough power to take the original arcade code of yesteryear's arcade classics and run them under emulation, whereby the original microprocessors of the old coin-op are reproduced with super-fast software. Such is the case with Konami's deluxe packs, where their ancient shooters have been ported over lock, stock and barrel onto the Saturn and PlayStation.

To be honest, I wasn't really expecting that much from the Salamander Deluxe Pack. Although I enjoyed the Gradius CD, I can't really say that I would've enjoyed paying that much money for it. I was expecting more of the same from this sequel pack, but what I got was a great surprise...

IT'S THREE GAMES IN ONE!

Three games have been converted over from the arcades for your interactive enjoyment. What you get is a pixel-perfect rendition of Salamander, one of the most demanding 2D scrolling blasters ever. Additionally you get the touch-up job, LifeForce, which is

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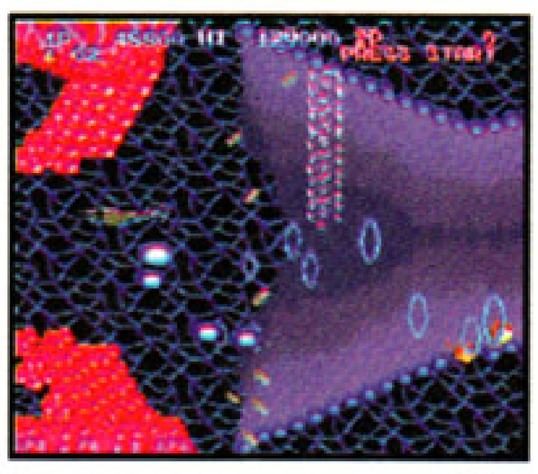


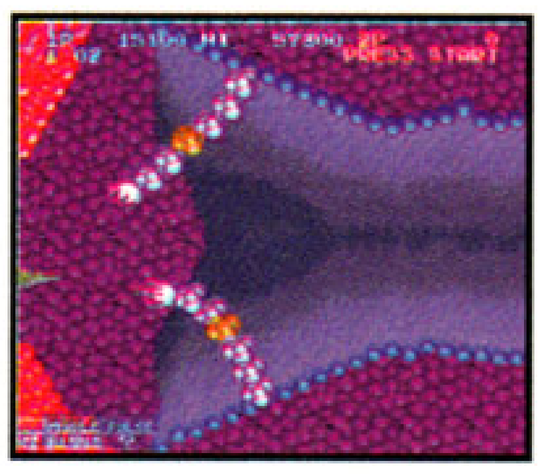
Salamander 2 combines sideways-scrolling action (left) with vertically shifting blasting (right).

The two shots below show the difference between Salamander (top) and pseudo-update LifeForce - both on the Deluxe Pack!









Combining Salamander and LifeForce along with a great conversion of the all-new Salamander 2 - this pack is a credit to Konami!

basically the same game completely albeit with different graphics (and your choice of power-up a la Gradius/Nemesis - the original Salamander chooses add-ons for you). To be honest, if you're expecting a completely new game with LifeForce, you're in for a big disappointment.

The really big news is that Salamander 2 has also made it into the pack. Now these old titles really are a bit creaky, we're talking over a decade old! Not so with Salamander 2 which came out in 1995. Just imagine Salamander with mid-nineties visuals, the best aspects of playability from its predecessors, along with a touch or two or R-Type... Sounds cool eh? Well, that's the emphasis of this feature, because this game is really enjoyable! Despite its graphics, it manages to retain what Salamander was all about, and really is a pretty classy blaster. As the shots here show.











Salamander 2 combines elements from the genre both old and new - it really is quite a cool little game!

SO WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Salamander is the follow-up to Nemesis, the first scrolling blaster in the world ever to feature a fully developed power-ups system. The new game is virtually more of the same albeit with vertically scrolling sections.

The power-ups though were virtually identical to the preceeding game. Speed-ups, missiles, lasers, multiples and shields were clearly the order of the day, only in Salamander you didn't choose which weapon you wanted - you got what you were given (although choice returned to the fore in the new version LifeForce, as explained before). A major success for Konami at the time, this is a classic game!

ANYTHING NEW?

Salamander 2 manages to add a few new concepts to the established gameplay in the form of more useful multiples, amongst other things. In the new game you can power them up and use them as smart homing weapons or defensive shields.

But to be honest, apart from that, everything else is pretty much standard fare. If it wasn't in the original Salamander, it was probably in R-Type. For example, there's a great spaceships level where your ship weaves in between enormous cruisers!

THE BAD NEWS

ThunderForce V is a cool game, but guess what? Currently there are no plans to bring it out over here. Such is also the case (unfortunately) with the Salamander Deluxe Pack. You can see where Konami are coming from because it's not hugely commerical, but we Saturn owners should really DEMAND an officail release!



This level of Salamander 2 is clearly inspired by the original.

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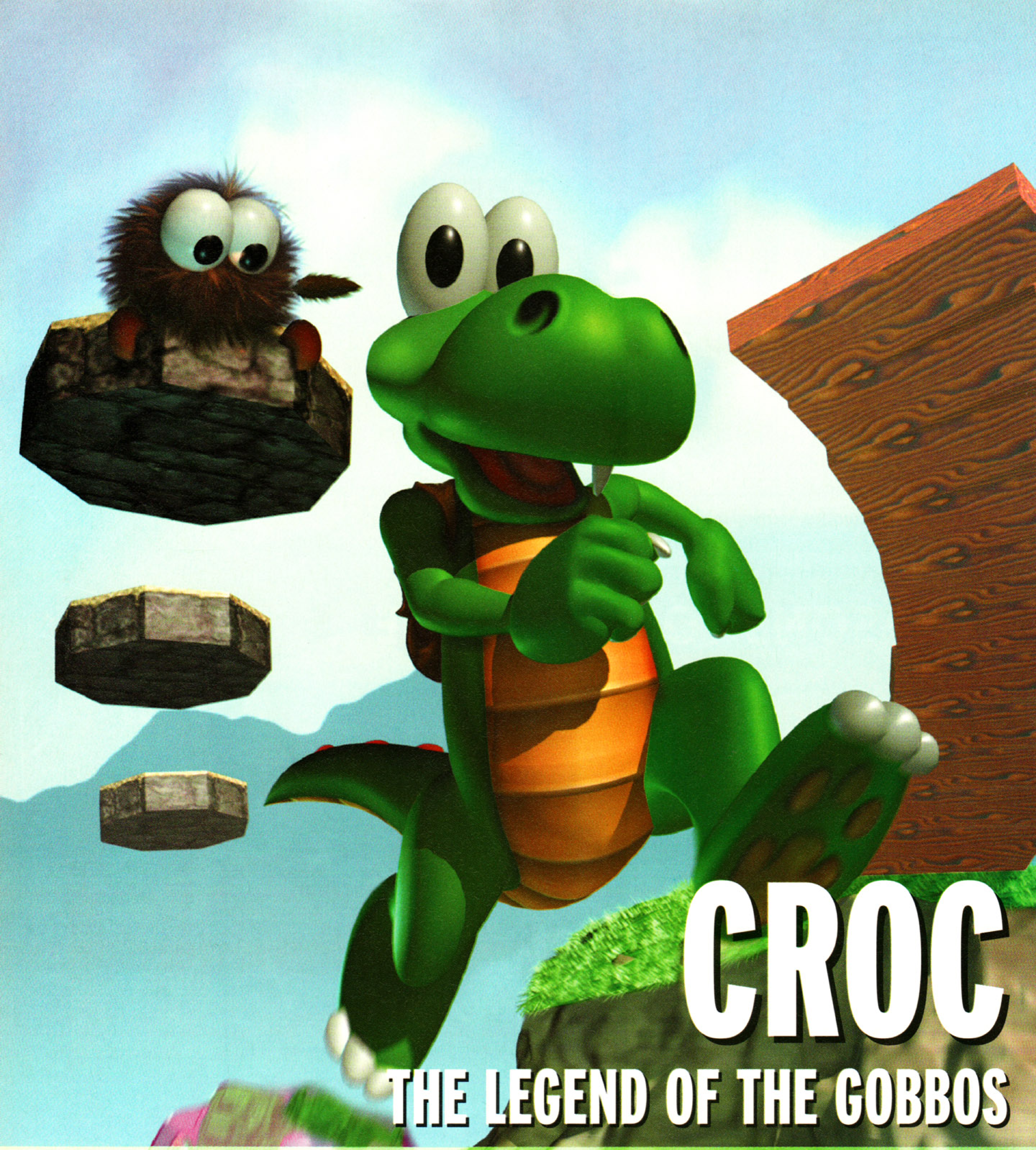
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CROC

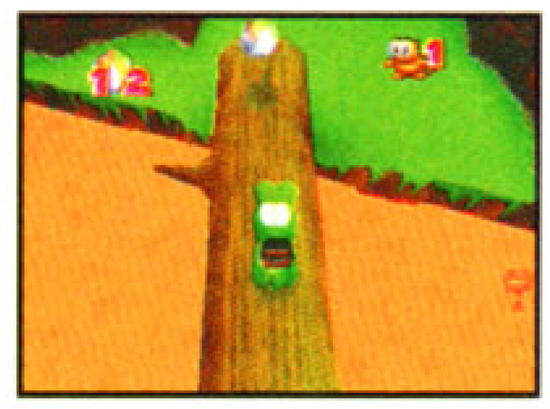
THE LEGEND OF THE GOBBOS

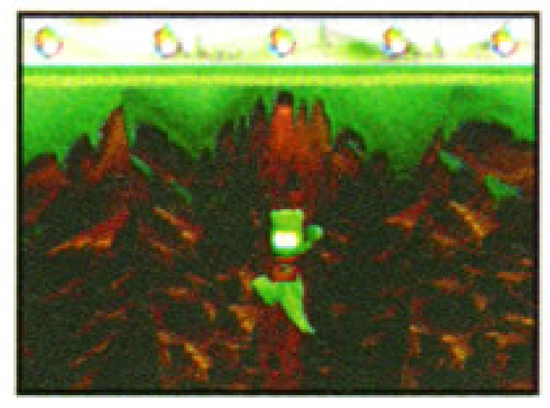
Following the phenomenal success of Alien Trilogy, Die Hard Trilogy and (ahem) Independence Day, Fox Interactive move into distinctly scaly territory with an original 3D platformer. MATT YEO snaps up an EXCLUSIVE first look at what could be the surprise Saturn hit of the year.

When it comes to the Saturn's 2D capabilities, even Sega's harshest critics will agree that the machine has an enviable track record of hits, with numerous Capcom beat 'em ups proving that even arcade perfect conversions are possible. However, the Saturn's 3D hardware on the other hand is constantly being tested by both the N64 and PlayStation, with the potential for creating realistic interactive environments expanding at a frightening rate. While certainly no slouch in the 3D department, as Tomb Raider, Fighters MegaMix, Panzer Dragoon Zwei and other ground breaking titles demonstrate, it's the responsibility of talented programmers and developers to push the Saturn's capabilities even further.









Thanks to a rather nifty selection of camera angles, players always have the perfect viewpoint.

ROCK AROUND THE CROC

As a relative newcomer to the world of video games, Fox Interactive have quickly established their status as one of the industry's leading lights and are committed Saturn developers. With a knack for selecting quality programming teams and for promoting their titles with the kind of media blitz usually associated with Hollywood blockbusters, Fox are also in the unique position of having access to the third largest entertainment back catalogue in existence (with the Beatles and Star Wars occupying the top two slots - Dr Fact). While future console titles will see such familiar faces as The Tick, The Simpsons and Aliens vs Predator leaping into the digital realm, Fox Interactive are currently putting the finishing touches to a completely original character who seems set for superstar status.

Croc: The Legend of the Gobbos (to give the game its full title) is a 3D platformer that introduces Saturn owners to a cute hero who's guaranteed to invoke cries of "ooh" and "ahh" from even the sternest of players. Croc himself is a young, backpack wearing reptile specifically designed by the game's creators, UK-based Argonaut Software, to appeal to both young and old players alike. So while Croc's simple cartoony visuals may appear to be aimed squarely at 10-12 year-olds, we can assure you that the game's learning curve will test the talents of even seasoned platform fans.



> Explore six challenging islands in order to free Croc's friends and put an end to the diabolical Baron's master plan once and for all!



The evil Baron Dante prepares to transform Tooty the Feeble.

TALL TAILS

The legend of of Croc is a tale that has been told to the Gobbo Island children for decades. Many years before, a baby crocodile mysteriously arrived in the peaceful island community and was adopted by the Gobbo king. Croc and the Gobbos lived in harmony until the twisted magician, Baron Dante, grew jealous of their peaceful existence. To teach them a lesson, the Baron put an evil spell on the Gobbo Islands, turning all the animals against their king. Knowing that Croc was his only hope, the king called on him to save the islands and to break the evil spell, giving him a magic bird to assist in his travels. Now Croc must explore six challenging islands in order to free his friends and put an end to the diabolical Baron's master plan once and for all!





As well as standard platform action, Croc also boasts a number of mini-games and bonus stages.



Croc's travels take him from the searing heat of desert levels to frozen atolls.





Croc's graphical engine is very smooth and perfect proof of the Saturn's power.

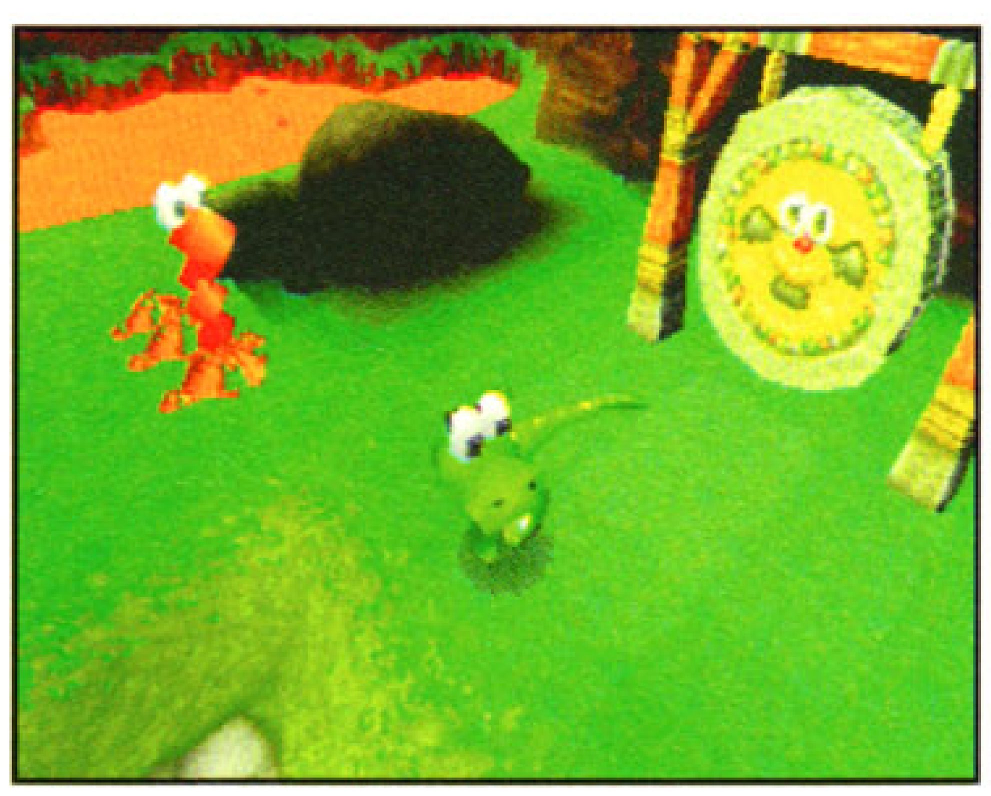




Locate secret crystals and free captured Gobbos from the Baron's clutches.



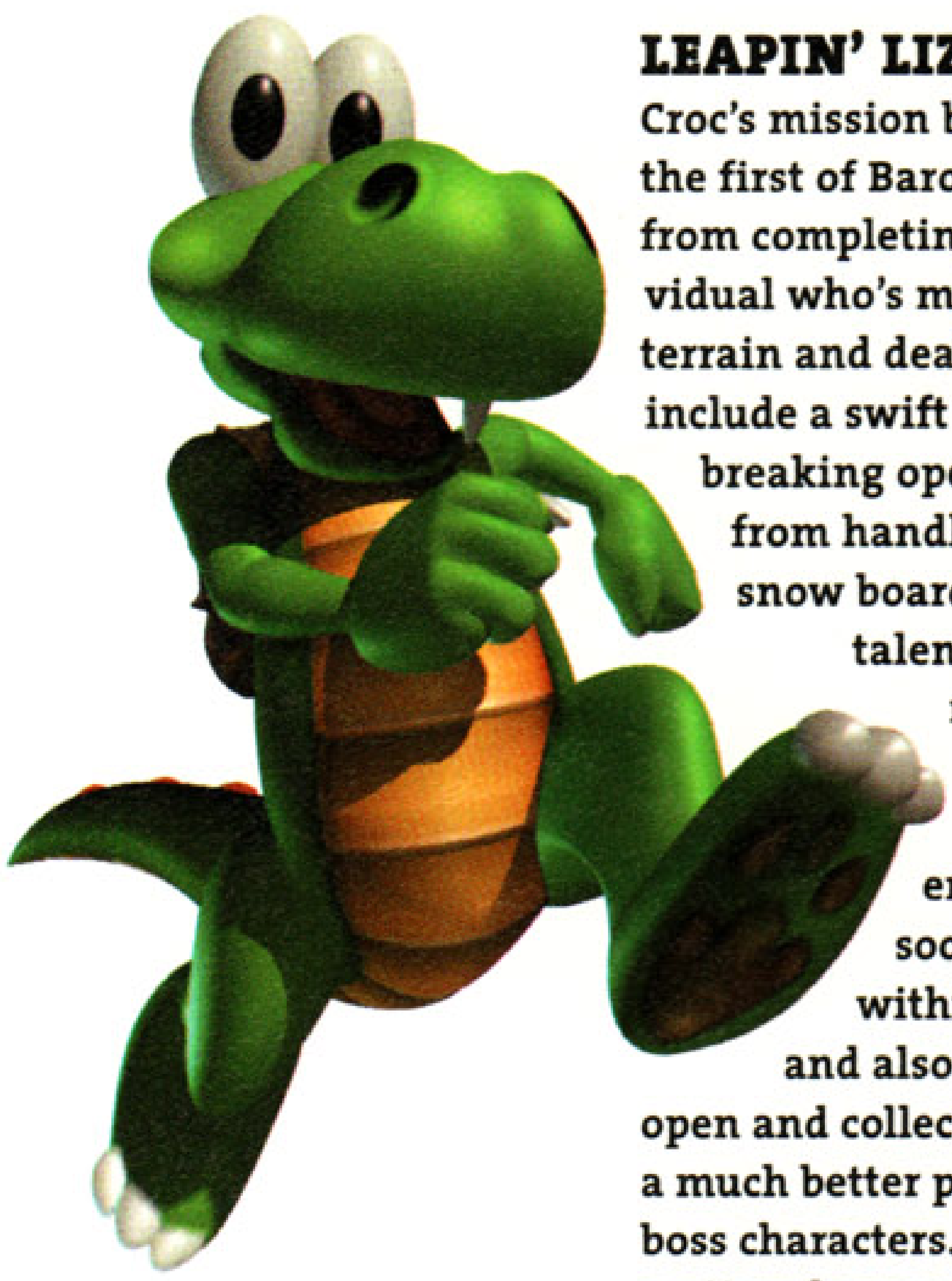
Hmm... do you press the switch first or free the Gobbo?



Use Croc's tail whip to take out troublesome foes.



Trademark moves include a swift whipping tail, a nifty "bottom bounce", the ability to climb sheer walls and even snow board.



LEAPIN' LIZARDS!

Croc's mission begins on the island of Gobbos as he encounters the first of Baron Dante's minions who attempt to stop him from completing his quest. Fortunately, Croc is a talented individual who's more than capable of traversing all manner of terrain and dealing with creepy creatures. Trademark moves include a swift whipping tail, a nifty "bottom bounce" for breaking open crates, the ability to climb sheer walls, swing from handholds, swim through swirling currents and even snow board. Players soon discover that mastering all these talents is vital for Croc's continued survival and for reaching areas that at first may appear to be completely inaccessible.

Croc actually starts each level with zero energy, requiring him to obtain special crystals as soon as possible. These crystals are usually located within boxes and packing crates scattered around and also hidden within each stage. By smashing them open and collecting the goodies contained within, our hero is in a much better position when it comes to tackling enemies and boss characters. If Croc is struck by a monster, the crystals are scattered around him but remain on screen for a few seconds to be collected once again. So while Sonic has his gold rings, Croc has his own method for boosting his lifespan.



CROCODILE VIEWS

Another plus for Saturn owners is that Croc is totally compatible with Sega's nifty analogue pad. As we discovered when playing the Sonic World section of Sonic Jam, when it comes to smoothly guiding a character around a 3D landscape, the analogue pad is a godsend, allowing for sharp turns and perfect circling movements to be achieved. To ensure players have a perfect view at all times, Argonaut have included a number of camera angles which may be selected as required. By using the X, Y and Z buttons, it's possible to explore and scan each stage without accidentally bumping into wandering enemies or falling foul of nasty traps. So unlike the frustrating viewpoint employed in Sonic World, Argonaut have managed to create amazingly detailed and richly texture mapped levels that don't suffer from pop-up or glitching, so therefore don't have to be hidden by an annoying camera angle.





Croc's talents are numerous, from wall-crawling and crate-pushing to creature-slapping and swift swimming.



Tread lightly in the ice stages as Croc slips and slides his way to the exit.



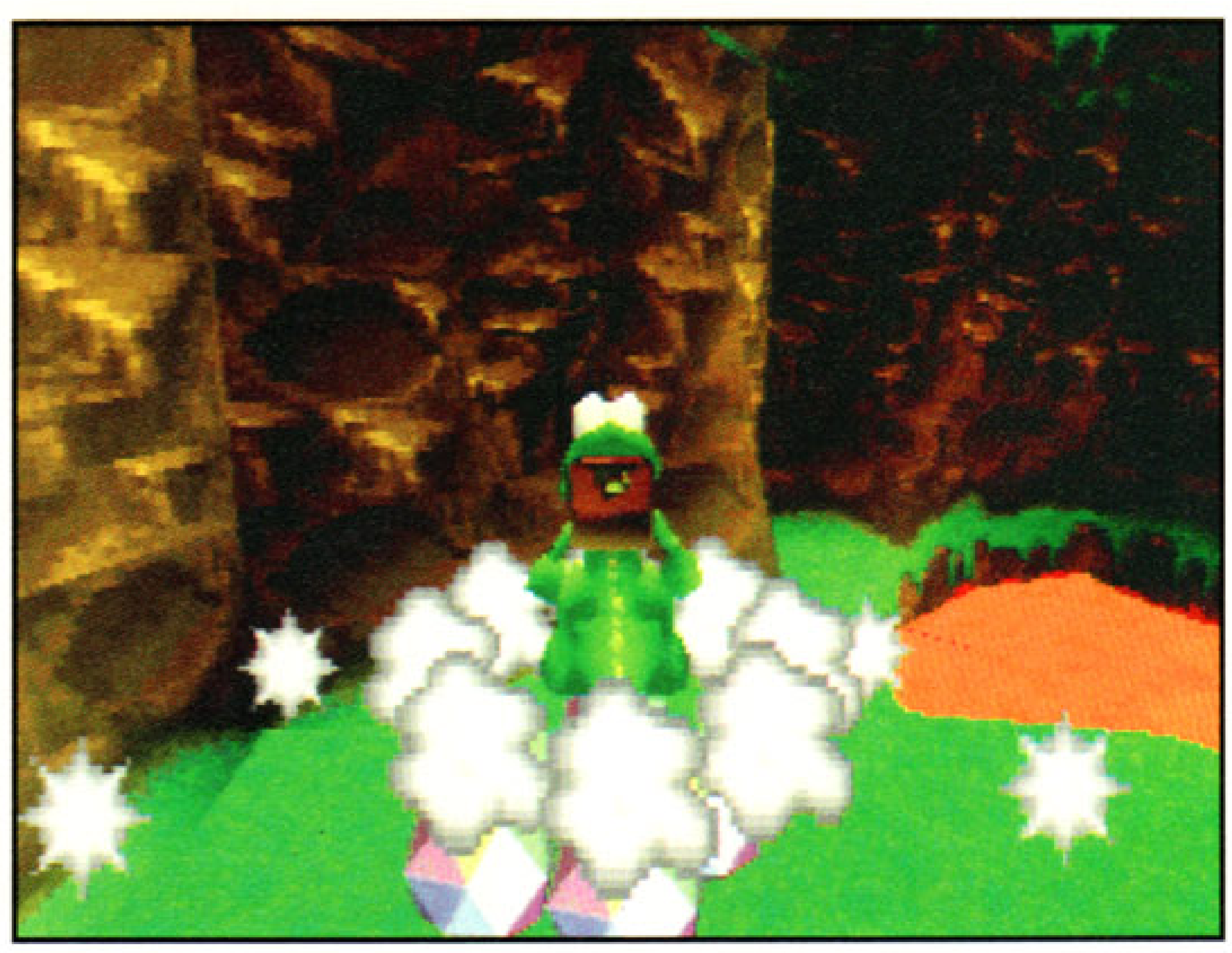


Switching between camera angles proves essential for avoiding certain traps.





Close-up views show just how much detail Argonaut have squeezed into Croc.



Smash open crates to collect precious life-giving crystals and other handy items.



Each stage contains a number of captured Gobbos just waiting to be rescued.



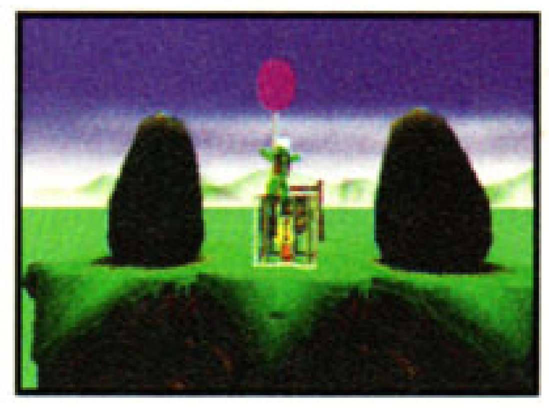
Collect hidden keys, unlock cages, jump platforms... phew, it's a Croc's life!

JOHN AND HIS ARGONAUTS

To develop Croc, Fox Interactive have tapped into the creative talents of Argonaut Software, a company that made its name during the 16-bit Golden Years and one of the most respected British development houses. For those of you not in the know, Argonaut were responsible for producing such Amiga classics as the Starglider series and also developed the Super FX chip which was employed in such Super NES games as StarFox and Stunt Race. As well as Croc, the company also has a number of console titles waiting in the wings with yet another Fox Interactive licence due next year in the long awaited form of Alien Resurrection.
As far as commitment to the Saturn goes, Argonaut's General Manager, John Edelson, is obviously a fan of Sega's machine. "Our programmers have found that the Saturn, while tricky to understand, has a lot more programming power and capabilities than most other developers realise. We have managed to get a wonderful transparency effect and to achieve great performance through the use of real time texture rotation. In fact, we feel that we are pushing the Saturn to levels of performance that even Sega are impressed by."

SEEYA LATER ALLIGATOR!

Although still in development it's safe to say that Croc is already looking incredibly cool. The game is currently scheduled for an October release so we should have a reviewable copy shortly. The version we've tested is roughly 60% complete but Argonaut are

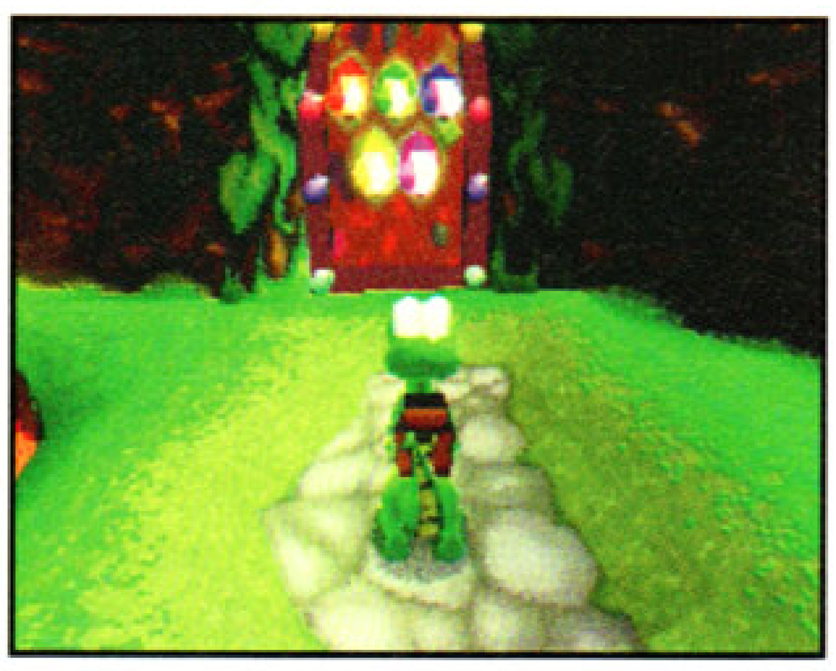




He flies through the air with the greatest of ease. Just one of Croc's many cool modes of transportation.

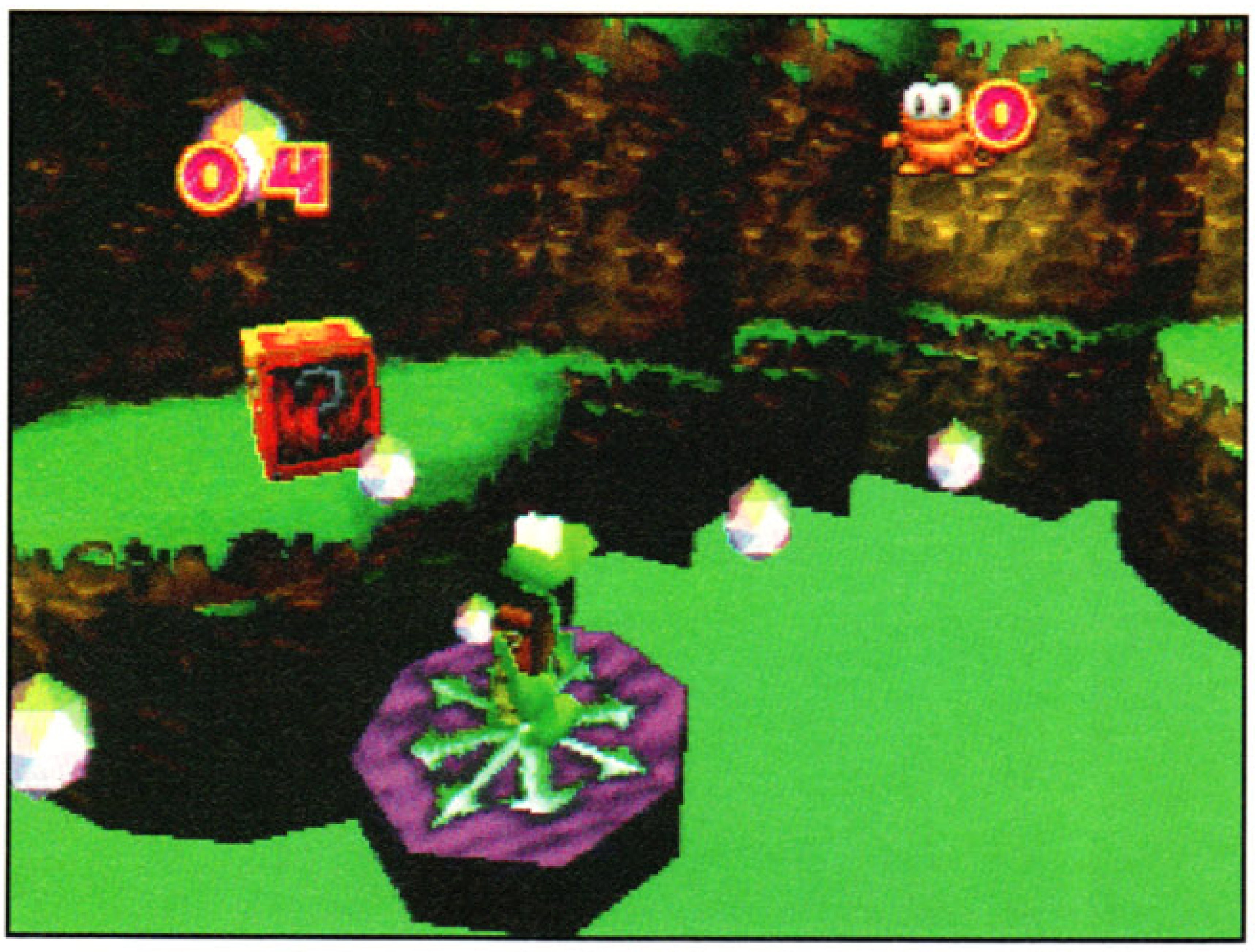
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Talented players will be able to locate each level's five hidden crystals with no hassle.

Argonaut have created amazingly detailed and richly textured levels that don't suffer from pop-up or glitching.



By facing the direction he wishes to travel in, Croc guides this platform to crystals and crates.





Croc is a lively and smoothly animated character packed with potential and some of the cutest moves ever granted a game star.





>> keen to emphasise that the finished game will be even more impressive. Croc himself is a lively and smoothly animated character packed with potential and some of the cutest moves ever granted a video game star. The game itself includes a number of classic platform elements such as smashing open boxes to collect hidden items, regenerating monsters, end-of-level bosses and secrets galore, but Fox are confident that Croc's unique structure and 3D construction will easily surpass other titles that have gone before. While there are certainly some similarities between Croc and Mario 64 (and even Crash Bandicoot to a lesser extent) the world of 3D platformers is only just being explored and if Fox Interactive's title shares the spotlight with Nintendo's creation then it's certainly in distinguished company.

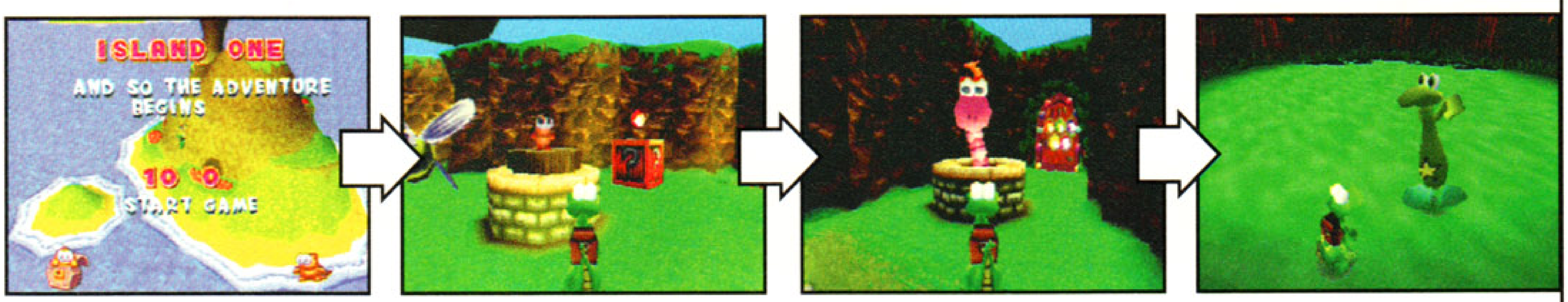
SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE will be continuing its in depth Croc coverage next month as we speak EXCLUSIVELY to the game's developers, Argonaut!

FANTASY ISLANDS

As previously mentioned, the world of Croc is split into six distinct worlds, each of which contains a number of varied and challenging sections. In fact there are well over 60 stages to be discovered. So while it's possible for players to simply complete each stage and swiftly proceed to the next, there are also other tasks to undertake and routes to be discovered with Fox promising all manner of hidden stages, bonus levels and special secrets. For instance, the very first stage is a simple level, geared towards familiarising players with the game's controls and character handling. The main exit leads to the following stage but there are also a couple of hidden extras to discover in this section as well as an alternative route to yet another level. With this non-linear approach to gameplay, players will spend hours exploring every inch of every stage in order to locate elusive crystals, concealed entrances and invisible platforms.

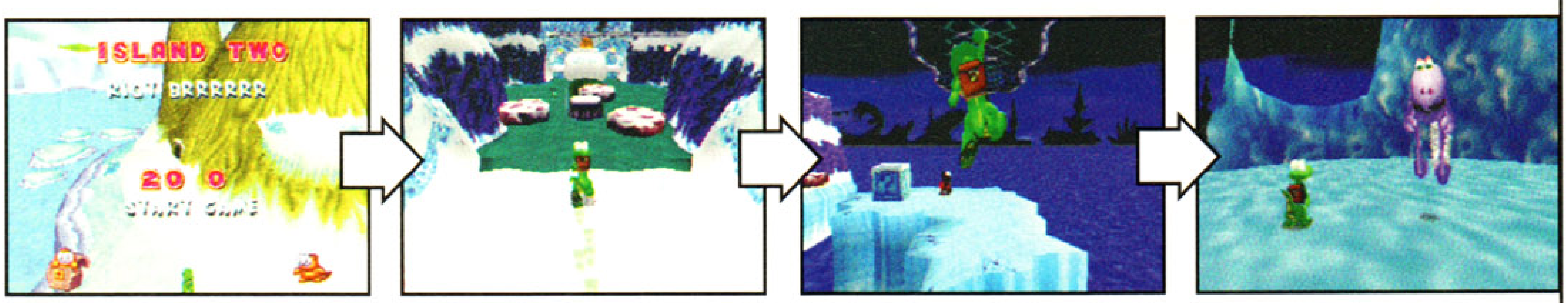
ISLAND 1

Croc's adventures begin on this grassy atoll, as he meets Gobbo snatching creatures, lava lakes and the end-of-level boss, Flibby the Ladybug!



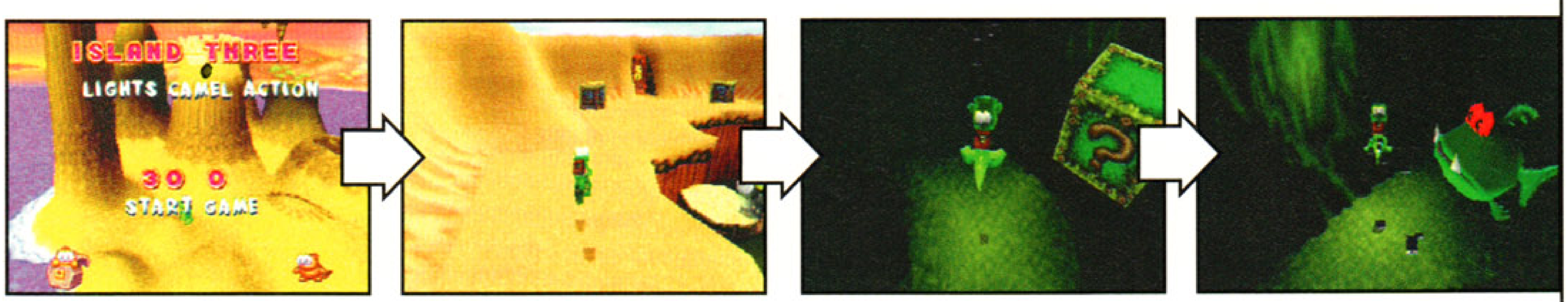
ISLAND 2

Chilling puns abound as Croc tackles such levels as The Ice of Life. Slippery platforms, ice blasts and Chumly the Rocket Man also lie in wait.



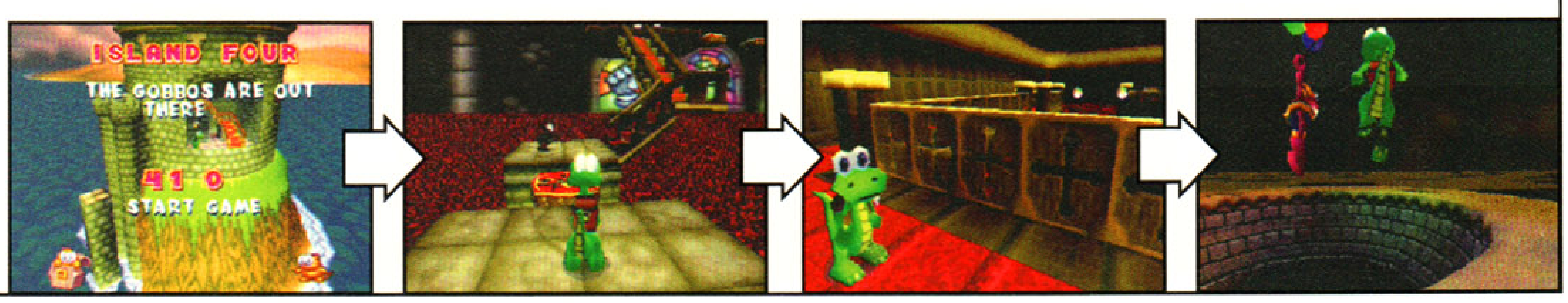
ISLAND 3

A complete change of environment as our green chum samples searing heat, cunning puzzles plus the devious Neptune the Tuna and Cactus Jack.



ISLAND 4

Baron Dante's castle is packed to the rafters with lethal traps and disabling devices to dodge. However, the best is yet to come...




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THE GOLDEN JOYSTICK AWARDS 1996/1997

The Golden Joysticks: your chance to reward the greatest games, developers and software houses around! Big prizes are on offer to those who fill in the form and send 'em in - full details of which will appear next issue!

BEST-LOOKING GAME

What game make you sit down and go "Wow! This just can't be the Saturn!"? Which games have ushered in a new era of graphical excellence?
Nominations: Exhumed, Fighters MegaMix, Tomb Raider, Street Fighter Alpha 2, Virtua Cop 2, Sega WorldWide Soccer '97, Soviet Strike

BEST SOUND

They told you to turn the volume down but you couldn't hear them! Sound, be it music or effects, is vitally important to establishing atmosphere and excitement in videogames.
Nominations: Exhumed, NiGHTS, Christmas NiGHTS, Street Fighter Alpha 2, Sonic 3D Blast

FAVOURITE GAMES CHARACTER

Who's your Saturn Star Performer? Games characters are just as important as gameplay and graphics these days as the likes of Sonic, Lara Croft and Candy prove!
Nominations: Sonic the Hedgehog, NiGHTS, Akira Yuki, Sarah Bryant, Candy, Lara Croft

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE BEST SATURN GAME

Which game has given you most excitement and most satisfaction? Which game has redefined your expectations of what the Saturn is capable of? Simply, which game is the best?
Nominations: Exhumed, Shining the Holy Ark, Street Fighter Alpha 2, Fighters MegaMix, Tomb Raider, Manx TT SuperBike, Soviet Strike, Saturn Bomberman.

MOST ORIGINAL GAME

In these times of arcade conversions and licensed tie-ins, originality can be sadly lacking. This is your opportunity to salute the game which has truly taken you by surprise with its original concept and gameplay.
Nominations: NiGHTS, Christmas NiGHTS, Shining the Holy Ark, Tomb Raider, Command and Conquer

BEST REVIEW WRITER

There's nothing's more important than the opinion of an experienced reviewer when it comes to buying your next game. So whose styl e and opinion do you respect the most?

HOTTEST SCOOP

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE prides itself on giving its readers the very hottest exclusives... and we've certainly had plenty in the last year (Quake, Duke Nukem, Marvel Super Heroes ad infinitum), so the question is: which particular scoop has excited you the most? Make your choice now!

BEST-LOOKING PAGES

We think you'd agree that great design, use of screenshots and artwork really makes a feature come alive. This category is meant to reward the unsung heroes of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE: its designers!

BEST AD

Advertising is an important aspect of all magazines. What we want to know is which advert, above any other, actually excited you enough to want to go out and buy the game involved?

BEST DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Without development teams, there would be no software. This is your opportunity to reward the people behind your favourite games.
Nominations: Lobotomy Software, AM1, AM2, AM3, Sonic Team, Core Design, Capcom, Travellers Tales, NMS Software

BEST SOFTWARE HOUSE

Is there any software publisher (that being the company with their name on the box) whose name is a byword for quality software? Who do YOU think has produced the best overall line-up of games?
Nominations: Sega, Capcom, Core Design, Gremlin Interactive, Codemasters, Electronic Arts

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golden joystick awards 1997

BEST-LOOKING GAME 1 ______________________

BEST SOUND 2 ______________________

FAVOURITE GAMES CHARACTER 3 ______________________

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE BEST GAME 5 ______________________

MOST ORIGINAL GAME 7 ______________________

BEST REVIEW WRITER 12 ______________________

HOTTEST SCOOP 11 ______________________

BEST-LOOKING PAGES 10 ______________________

BEST AD 13 ______________________

BEST DEVELOPMENT TEAM 14 ______________________

BEST SOFTWARE HOUSE 15 ______________________

NAME __________ **AGE** ____ **PHONE NUMBER** __________

Send all entries to:
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E14 9TZ.

Remember: Closing date for ALL entries is 21 October. You may photocopy this form. One entry per reader only.

Virtua Writer™

Yep, as expected 99.9% of the letters received this month were deranged ramblings on the highly contentious subject of the canning of the Saturn version of Tomb Raider 2. Clearly the prospect of not being able to enjoy more of Lara's bending over antics in increasingly skimpy attire, has upset some, if not all, of our readership. But if you have something more interesting to talk about, the address is: VIRTUA WRITER, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 37-39 Millharbour, The Isle of Dogs, London, E14 9TZ or email virtua.writer@ecm.emap.com. If your hand writing is neat enough, you may win an exclusive VF3 book!

PLAYSTATION A BETTER MACHINE?

DEAR SSM

I am having a bit, well a lot of a rethink about my purchase of a Saturn last Christmas. I own some really good games (Tomb Raider, NiGHTS, VF2, VC2 and Guardian Heroes) but then I see what the PlayStation has to offer in the games department and I'm thinking of doing an exchange at EB. I reckon the PlayStation is a better machine, I mean take a look at Die Hard Trilogy on the PS and it wipes the floor with the Saturn version. The same goes for Tomb Raider and Exhumed, which originally came out on the Saturn but the graphics and smoothness are not as good as the PS version (*WRONG: Saturn Exhumed is far smoother than the PlayStation version - RICH*) and Soul Blade kicks the crap out of Fighters MegaMix. What I want to know is, can you give me one good reason to keep hold of my Saturn.

Peter Stanhope

Quake. LEE



Quake. Arguably one of the greatest games ever and a Saturn exclusive. Reason enough to buy a Saturn NOW!

CHEAPER AND A LOT BETTER

DEAR SSM

Something which has puzzled me and my friends for some time is why you don't put a demo disc on every issue of your brilliant magazine. Your competitors promise to have one on every single issue, but you're the official magazine and yet only have one every so often. Why is this, surely if you're official you should get all the discs? I only ask because I can't afford to pay a fiver for their discs and your mag is cheaper and a lot better.

Andy Mee, DSS

Well "Andy", we covered a similar query last month, but to reiterate the point, we're not prepared to compromise the quality of our discs by promising one every month. There simply isn't the quality demos available. We don't want to end up in the highly embarrassing situation of having to put a substandard audio CD on the cover just to keep our promise. Hence we feature discs with several playable demos of the best games available and at an affordable price. LEE
We're hoping to up both the quality and quantity of our discs... some of the stuff we're planning is seriously mind-blowing and VERY exclusive! Watch this space. RICH

CORE BLIMEY!

DEAR SSM

What the hell is all this crap about Tomb Raider 2 not coming out on the Saturn? I was totally outraged to read your news article in issue 21 and I am sure this letter reflects the opinions of just about every Saturn owner as TR2 is one of the most eagerly awaited titles on the Saturn.

I personally think it is completely unacceptable for Core to produce a sequel to a game that is not compatible with the original format. Tomb Raider was a big hit in '96 on the Saturn, PlayStation and PC and to release TR2 on just the PS and PC is just not on. It is wrong, it is outrageous, it is politically incorrect, say what you like. No doubt this is one of hundreds of letters you will receive on the subject.

Now, having voiced my discontent I also have a solution. If Core reckon the Saturn can't handle TR2, then why not give it to Lobotomy. As we all know Lobotomy are probably the best in the business having done things with the Saturn which everyone thought impossible. Just think a Lobotomy version of TR2. Now that would be a game worth waiting for. What do you reckon, eh?

Carl Maltby, Birmingham

We were similarly outraged when we discovered that Tomb Raider 2 was not Saturn bound, especially considering the success of the original. Core insist that due to the "technical advances of the Tomb Raider engine it is with regret that Eidos and Core Design find themselves unable to develop TR2 for the Saturn". We find this difficult to believe, considering PlayStation Quake has been canned due to its inability to handle the 3D engine, yet the Saturn version is nigh-on PC perfect. We suggest reading between the lines to gain a more accurate picture of the reasons behind this strange move. LEE
Lobotomy's game design skills are second to none. Whether or not Duke or Quake are better, Exhumed will always be an epoch-making piece of software. The PC conversions mentioned are the only ones I'd want Lobotomy to undertake - they should be allowed to wow the world with their own original works. As it is, I don't think anyone buys the "technical difficulties" Core are having with Saturn Tomb Raider 2. It's more likely that the amount of effort they'd have to put in would not justify the financial return. RICH

LIGHT TRAILS COMING FROM REAR

DEAR SSM

We would like to point out a contradiction in the July issue of your magazine.

In your Q+A page you stated that the Saturn can replicate any graphical effect that the PlayStation can. Yet! In your article concerning WipEout 2097 you mention two distinct differences and I quote: "There is a slight drop in resolution..." and more noticeably "The light trails coming from the rear of each vehicle are mesh works".

So we are wondering why you state there is no differences between the PlayStation and the Saturn graphically on one page, and say there are differences on another. Please could we have your views on this.

Simon and Mark, Maidenhead

The Saturn is clearly able to replicate any graphical effects seen on the PlayStation, of that there is no doubt. Though only recently developers such as Eidos, Travellers Tales and the Sonic Team have got to grips with transparency effects, light-sourcing, high-resolutions and so forth have long been evident on the Saturn. But that's not to say that every developer who programs for the Saturn is going to incorporate such graphical effects into their game. Though lacking the graphical frippery of the PlayStation version, Saturn WipEout 2097 is an excellent conversion which plays identically to the original. This also highlights the problems faced by programming teams when converting games to a completely different platform. Exhumed for example, was programmed primarily for the Saturn and so suffered in the transition to the PS. You see? LEE
Take a look at Panzer Dragoon Zwei or indeed the forthcoming Sonic R, which feature 3D graphics effect PlayStation CANNOT achieve. I won't even begin to mention Quake... RICH

A VIRTUALLY PERFECT MAG

DEAR SSM

Right. I want to get straight to my point. Although your mag is perfect in virtually every respect, I feel you have done us loyal Daytona fans (and indeed import buyers) a massive disservice. Allow me to explain.

I have read in numerous games mags that Daytona CCE (which, incidentally I own) is not the "real" Daytona everybody wanted (and indeed, isn't) as more polished as it was over the disappointing original. Well, it so happens that I read in an American magazine Gamefan that the American version of Daytona CCE has: refined CPU AI, handling closer to the coin-op, night time and evening driving, the original B-UNIV tunes. But the clipping and textures aren't quite as good. Why didn't you inform us of this? Anyway, now I'll be flogging my European ver-

sion of Daytona CCE and I'll be buying an adaptor and the American version of it. I just wish I'd known earlier. What do you have to say for yourselves?

Vassili Romeos, Harborough

Several things. Firstly, due to massive consumer demand it was the European version of Daytona CCE which came out first, with NTSC versions following several months later. So we had no way of knowing that the Japanese and American versions of the game would be different. Secondly, after extensively playing both the PAL and NTSC versions of the game, I can tell you that the differences between the two are negligible and certainly not worth the huge import prices. Lastly, whilst the adaptor you refer to allows you to play import games, they run 17% slower and with big, black borders. Is it worth it? LEE

The Japanese game is the best version because it came out three months later. The American version is virtually identical to the UK game. Read GameFan properly and you'll see that they're complaining that their version isn't as good as the Japanese one (in fact my mate Dan Jevons wrote the piece you mention!). If you've got something to moan about please do your research properly before bothering us. RICH

GRAPHICS MAKETH NOT A GAME

Dear SSM

For many months I have been wondering about your seemingly illogical Daytona CCE scores in the Out Now section. I played it solidly from November to June with stunning graphics, high frame rate and massively improved graphics. I couldn't understand why you gave it a low mark compared to the original conversion (slow frame rate, bad clipping, tiny play window). So for seven months I enjoyed the wonderful world of DCCE. Then, last weekend I bought an ex-rental copy of the original Daytona to complete the set. The graphics! The gameplay! The cars



As good as it is, Daytona CCE fails to convey the feel of the arcade, something we pointed out in the review.

seemed to shift faster than the sequel, with all the arcade handling and feeling, a feeling lost in the seemingly better sequel.

The point being, graphics maketh not a game! I thank you for your frankness in your reviews and I now understand the point you are making. Hoorah for you!

Christopher Heighton, Northumberland

I have long been an exponent of the original Saturn Daytona, having owned the Japanese version for some time. In terms of audio, visuals and gameplay it manages to successfully bring the coin-op into the comfort of your front room. Whilst being a fine racing game, Daytona CCE lost the feel of the arcade in the translation, something we pointed out in the review some months ago. It was a tough call with expectations being so high, but we're not in the business of deceiving our readers. LEE

BLABBERING CVG FOOLS!

Dear SSM

I bought a Saturn because of its quality 2D beat 'em ups because they are the types of game that I get excitement and pleasure out of and I knew the PlayStation couldn't handle them as well. I recently read in CVG that Street Fighter 3 would be released at the end of this year on the Saturn, but what of X-Men vs Street Fighter? I believe this is the best 2D fighting game ever and Street Fighter 3 is no match for this. I read in issue 21 of your mag that it is actually X-Men vs Street Fighter which gets released at the end of this year, not SF3. So what do I believe?

Someone, somewhere

By the time you read this, Marvel Super Heroes will be available in Japan with a PAL version to follow. Capcom have also confirmed X-Men vs Street Fighter for this year (in Japan anyway), with Marvel Super Heroes vs Street Fighter and Vampire Saviour (DalkStalkers 3) also Saturn bound. Though not confirmed as of yet, Street Fighter 3 is a distinct possibility but certainly not this year. Damn those blabbering CVG fools. LEE

MARVEL MAYHEM

Dear SSM

After reading last issue's feature on Capcom's conversion of Marvel Super Heroes to the Saturn, I was annoyed to learn that the game will probably not appear in Europe with the RAM cart to boost animation and speed. Is it just me or is this a wasted opportunity? Why pay £40-50 for a game that could be arcade perfect if only Sega released the appropriate cartridge? Why don't Sega for once work out a deal so as to have an arcade perfect version of Marvel for us European Saturn owners? This is as good as making it Saturn exclusive as there is no way the PS can match the Saturn and RAM cart package.

Jim Foley, Ireland

As much as we share your discontent with the RAM cart situation, things aren't quite as bleak as you make out. Depending on your financial situation and how dedicated a gamer you are, you could consider getting an NTSC switch fitted to your Saturn. This would allow you to play import versions of the forthcoming Capcom games as they were intended, full screen and full speed, and with the RAM cartridge. If your resources can't run to that, take solace in the fact that we've seen the Saturn version of Marvel running without the cartridge and it is awesome! Best of all, it shats on the PS version from a great height. LEE

The RAM cart is owned by virtually every 2D fan in Japan, as it's bundled with the best 2D games (Capcom titles and SNK games). Marvel is great without the cart, but with the extra RAM it's just mind-blowing. I doubt that Capcom will remove the RAM cart code from the PAL version, so just grab a cart from an importer. RICH

BRIEFLY...

Dear SSM

I was flicking through a recent issue of Saturn Power (I looked but I didn't buy), and I saw the first shots of the new Strike game on the Saturn. The Strike games are some of my favourite ever, having had all of them on the Megadrive and Soviet Strike. Please can you give us some information on this and any other Strike games, a Megadrive one possibly?

Andy Finch, Birmingham

Yet again, we find ourselves in the undesirable position of having to clean up the mess left in the wake of less reliable magazines. The shots you saw were definitely NOT Saturn shots, but most likely taken from the PlayStation version of Nuclear Strike. How do we know? Because unfortunately EA have decided not to do a Saturn version of the latest Strike game. Shame. LEE

Dear SSM

What is "Black Belt" and where can I get one?

Jamie Samms, Lancashire

Black Belt is a symbolic piece of material which persons of the martial arts persuasion tie around their waste to denote that they're incredibly hard and would take great pleasure in kicking your teeth in and calling it "sport". LEE

Dear SSM

Has anyone else seen on Sega Flash 4 the movie of Sega Touring Car, that when it is on the car select screen the words Sega Saturn is on the background? Is this the Saturn version we've all seen? And what about the other two arcade games which follow (VF3 and Last Bronx) Could these be the Saturn versions too?

Preston Thomas, Gwent

Nope. The movie footage on the demo disc was taken from the arcade versions of the games, though two of them are featured elsewhere in this issue. LEE

Dear SSM

This upgrade for the Saturn, what does it consist of, where will they put it, will it be another cartridge, if so, will it not get in the way of the memory cartridge, how would we be able to save games and what sort of price are we talking about? These are all questions I hope you can answer.

ML, Croydon

We don't usually answer questions in the letter's page, but as several readers have raised the same query, your letter has been granted a stay of execution. Sega have announced a new four megabyte RAM cartridge for the Saturn, which will be used in forthcoming Capcom games, (see this month's news). As for a VF3 upgrade, if such a device exists it still remains shrouded in secrecy. LEE

Q&A

This month, Jonathon Childs from Northwood has incurred the wrath of the Master for sending in the same letter four times! Get this: he quotes his "mum's friend" who thinks the new Sega machine will be called Neptune! Because of his multiple sending activities I spent up four times the amount of time I would have liked throwing his letter in the bin - hmmmm. If you have any decent questions, write in to Non-Insolent Q+A, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 37-39 Millharbour, Isle of Dogs, London E14 9TZ or email 'em to ssm.qa@ecm.emap.com.

QUAKE EXCLUSIVE

Dear SSM

I've been reading your mag since issue #5 so please answer my questions.

1. Will Quake be Saturn exclusive?
2. I'm going to America on holiday. Will I need to buy a converter if I buy games from there to use over here.
3. What on Earth is Project Sonic Part 2 going to be?

Mike Franks, Wombourne.

1. Until the N64 version comes out next year, yes. The PlayStation version is heavily rumoured to be canned.
2. Yes, and they won't be PAL-optimised, so look out for BIG black borders and slower speeds.
3. It's Sonic R - the mega-looking racing game revealed last issue! It's going to be great!

FIGHTING GAME QUESTIONS

Dear SSM

I have a couple of questions which I would greatly appreciate if you could answer them.

1. Being a bit of a beat 'em up fan I am quite pleased that King of Fighters 95 is coming out for the Saturn, but will the UK release come with that nifty memory cartridge.
2. If so how much will it cost?
3. Okay, this question is for Rich mainly. Being the little Marvel fan that I am I want to ask what you think of this idea: a Fantastic Four beat 'em up made by Capcom in the style of Marvel Super Heroes? I mean think of the possibilities of playing as Mr Fantastic or the Black Panther!
4. When in God's name is MSH coming out in England?
5. I have Virtua Fighter 1 and 2, Sega Rally, Daytona CCE, NiGHTS, Christmas NiGHTS, Street Fighter Alpha 2, X-Men, Night Warriors, WipEout, WWF, Story of Thor 2 and Clockwork Knight. Which game should I get next?
6. Why in God's name haven't you done a Story of Thor 2 solution? I need it!

William Taylor, East Sussex.

1. Yes it does, but bear in mind it's the ROM cart designed for KoF 95 specifically, not the RAM cart you can use with other games. 2. Hopefully £39.99. 3. Pretty cool, yes. But I'd much rather see a Spider-Man game on CPS-III. Characters: Spidey, Black Cat, Venom, Carnage, Daredevil, Doc Ock, Green Goblin, Electro, Sandman and Doctor Doom. It would be AWESOME! Far superior to this Marvel Super Heroes versus Street Fighter frippery. 4. Virgin Interactive have announced a November release. 5. Your collection is seriously bereft of Panzer Zwei and Exhumed activities: both are ESSENTIAL! 6. Methinks you take the Lord's name in vain.

DONE AND DONE

Dear SSM

I have been reading your mag every month since it came out because it's ace. I was hoping you could answer some questions for me.

1. In the Saturn version of Duke Nukem 3D, will you be able to build your own levels, like in the PC version?
2. Will the extra episode - the Birth - from the Atomic Edition of Duke make an appearance in the Saturn version?
3. Can you print Bean's moves from Fighters MegaMix. Because you forgot.
4. Any chance of Theme Hospital making an appearance?
5. What happened to Fade to Black?
6. I know Sega Rally is brilliant and all, but it is not like real rallying. How about a rally sim such as Network Q RAC Rally Championship on the PC?
7. How about a Red Dwarf game?

Andrew O'Flaherty, Merseyside.

1. No. 2. No, but what about a Lobotomy designed secret stage? Now there's a thought. 3. Done and done. Last issue, specifically. 4. There are no plans. 5. It never happened. 6. Not likely. 7. If it's anything like the dull, unfunny last series, no.

RPGS AND OTHER STUFF

Dear SSM

Please could you answer my questions.

1. I am stuck on Shining the Holy Ark, please could you tell me how to get into the Tower of Illusion?
2. Is there a Mystaria 2. If so, when is it coming out?
3. Is Syndicate Wars ever going to come out as it is coming to the PlayStation?
4. Please could you tell me how to become a games designer as I have a couple of ideas for games?

Andy, Essex.

1. The answer is on page 82 of this issue. 2. There is in Japan but there are currently no plans for a UK release. 3. No it's not. 4. Write to a few companies with your ideas. But I honestly wouldn't hold out much hope for this as a serious profession.

MORE MARVEL QUESTIONS

Dear SSM

Please could you answer these questions.

1. When will Mortal Kombat Trilogy be released?
2. If Sega choose not to release the memory cartridge in Britain, will an import cartridge work with a British game?
3. Is there going to be a Marvel Super Heroes 2 on arcade and Saturn? I think that characters to include should be Doctor Doom and Thanos (playable), Cyclops, Silver Surfer, Hawkeye, Firestar, Silver Samurai, Green Goblin, Venom and Morbius. What do you think?
4. Are Sega planning to do a Golden Axe compilation (like Sonic Jam)?
5. Are Sega developing a full game based on the Sonic World part of Sonic Jam?
6. Is the Saturn upgrade for Virtua Fighter 3 likely to be released here for Christmas?
7. Why do you only feature Sega games on your demo discs?

Lee Coupland, Somewheresville.

1. Development is complete - we'll let you know about a UK release when we hace info. 2. I doubt they'd remove the RAM cart specific code. We'll try it when we have PAL Marvel in the office and let you know. Based on the Japanese version we have (which has an option to turn RAM support on/off) I'd hazard a guess of YES! 3. Doom, Venom and Green Goblin - yes. The others are just too dull. Except for the Silver Surfer who would annihilate EVERYONE with the Power Cosmic - unless he's powered down in a Juggernaut/ Thanos/ Magneto stylee. I mean, Psylocke versus Juggy (or indeed Thanos) in MSH is stretching credibility just a bit too far. 4. Well, Sega Ages is alive and well so there's always hope. 5. According to our interview with Sonic R's producer last month, Sonic Team are currently working on an all-new Saturn title for release next year. Whether or not it uses the Sonic World engine is unknown. 6. No. If an upgrade is going to be released at all. 7. We're working on some QUALITY third party products for future CDs plus a surprise or two...

FAQ

Here's the section of Q+A where your most common queries are lumped together and answered en masse. As we always say: for quick answers on the burning questions, look here first!

1. Will we see Lara Croft on Saturn again?

Tomb Raider 2 is still canned. A secret character in Fighting Force? Come on Core - put it in - and make it a Saturn exclusive cheat!

2. When are Grandia and Silhouette Mirage coming out?

Both games are being published in Japan by GD-Net. We're pretty sure that Sega is looking into licensing them right now.

3. Are you going to be doing a demo CD every month?

We're looking into it but we prefer quality discs over quantity. And we're definitely an audio CD free zone - no "block-rocking beats" rip-offs. SSM aims to stick to its promises.

4. Is the Saturn dying?

1997's line-up is just awesome. Games like Sonic R and Quake prove conclusively that there's still untapped potential in the machine - neither of these games could be replicated exactly on PlayStation - and that's a fact!



ISSUE #1 NOV 95
Reviewed: Clockwork Knight 2, Sim City 2000, Theme Park, Street Fighter: The Movie, NBA Jam TE, Robotica, NHL Hockey, Rayman, World Series Baseball.
FIRST ever issue of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE replete with features on Virtua Fighter 2 and Virtua Cop!



ISSUE #2 DEC 95
Reviewed: Virtua Fighter 2, Virtua Cop, Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2, Hi-Octane, Victory Boxing, Golden Axe: The Duel, Mansion of Hidden Souls, Hebereke's Popoito, CyberSpeedway. Showcased: Virtua Fighter 2, Firestorm, X-Men: Children of the Atom.



ISSUE #3 JAN 96
Reviewed: Sega Rally, F1 Live Information, Galactic Attack, Mystaria, Worms, Virtua Racing, Off-World Interceptor. Showcases: Guardian Heroes, Mystaria, FIFA '96... plus all the secrets of Virtua Cop! Plus ultimate Sega Rally coverage... the BEST racing game!



ISSUE #4 FEB 96
Reviewed: Wing Arms, FIFA '96, Virtual Golf, Johnny Bazookatone, Toshinden, Cyberia, Casper, D, True Pinball, World Cup Golf. Showcases: Vampire Hunter/Street Fighter Alpha, D and all the secret cheats of Sega Rally! Plus Panzer Zwei AND part one of the VF2 Masterclass!



ISSUE #5 MAR 96
Reviewed: X-Men: Children of the Atom, Darius, Baku Baku Animal, NFL Quarterback Club, Hang On '96, Titan Wars. Showcases: Euro '96, Legend of Thor, Street Fighter Alpha, X-Men, Guardian Heroes, Panzer Zwei! Plus: VF2 masterclass and Sega Rally guide!



ISSUE #6 APR 96
Reviewed: WipEout, Magic Carpet, Street Fighter Alpha, Shellshock, Valora Valley Golf, Shining Wisdom, Gex. Showcases: Magic Carpet, Gun Griffon, MK3, Panzer Zwei, DarkStalkers/Vampire Hunter. Plus: VF2 Masterclass part three AND a cool WipEout guide.



ISSUE #7 MAY 96
FREE! REVIEW AND TIPS BOOK! And! NiGHTS revealed! Reviews: Euro '96, Panzer Zwei, Defcon 5, The Horde, Nightwarriors/Vampire Hunter, Revolution X, Alone in the Dark 2. VF2 masterclass: the penultimate edition. WipEout guide part two, plus all the X-Men moves too!



ISSUE #8 JUN 96
Heart of Darkness featured... and it's still not out! Reviewed:Guardian Heroes, Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3, In the Hunt, Discworld, 3D Lemmings. Showcases: Panzer Zwei final, NiGHTS, Guardian Heroes final update. Full detailage on top games still worth buying today!



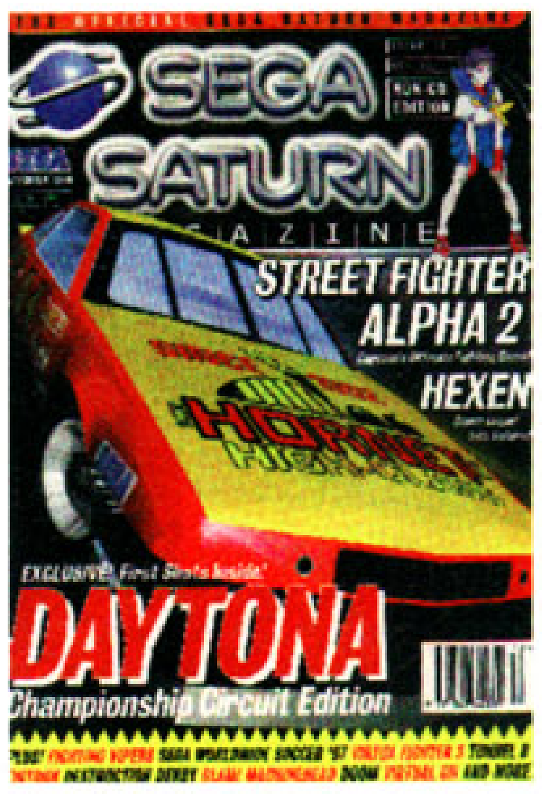
ISSUE #9 JUL 96
Full E3 report with first Cop 2 coverage! Reviewed: Loaded, Need for Speed, Shockwave Assault, Big Hurt Baseball, Blackfire, WWF, Striker, Virtual Open Tennis, Ghen War. Showcases: Sonic X-Treme (now canned!), VF Kids, Exhumed, Space Hulk and of course NiGHTS!



ISSUE #10 AUG 96
NiGHTS: Sonic Team's amazing game finally arrives! Reviewed: NiGHTS, Road Rash, Primal Rage, Slam and Jam, Starfighter 3000, Olympic Football, Sea Bass Fishing, Pro Pinball. Showcases: Athlete Kings, VF Kids, Alien Trilogy. Also: Guardian Heroes Tips!



ISSUE #11 SEP 96
Amazing Candy Fighting Vipers Cover! Reviewed: VF Kids, Alien Trilogy, Athlete Kings, Exhumed, NBA Action, Space Hulk, Keio Flying Squadron, Bust-A-Move, Story of Thor, PowerPlay Hockey. Showcases: Sega Ages, Cop 2, Soviet Strike. Plus: Shining Wisdom tips



ISSUE #12 OCT 96
Daytona CCE revealed! Reviewed: WorldWide Soccer '97, Fighting Vipers, Actua Golf, Destruction Derby, Blam! Machinehead, Bubble Bobble Pack, Highway 2000. Also included: Awesome NiGHTS guide that will blow you away. And! The dread arrival of The Master!



ISSUE #13 NOV 96
Amazing Street Fighter Alpha 2 coverage! Reviewed: Street Fighter Alpha 2, World Series Baseball 2, Tomb Raider, Earthworm Jim 2, Impact Racing. Showcases: Vipers part 2 plus programmer interview, Tomb Raider. Plus: tips to get you all the way through Exhumed!



ISSUE #14 DEC 96
World's First Virtua Cop 2 Review! Also reviewed: Daytona CCE, Amok, Street Racer, Hardcore 4x4, Chaos Control, Three Dirty Dwarves, Blazing Dragons, Crimewave, PGA Golf '97. Showcases: Cop 2, Christmas NiGHTS, Daytona CCE. Lobotomy Software interviewed!



ISSUE #15 JAN 97
COVER CD WITH VIRTUAL ON, DAYTONA CCE, WORLDWIDE SOCCER, TOMB RAIDER! Reviewed: Virtual On, Blast Chamber, NHL Hockey '97, Command and Conquer, Sega Ages, Mighty Hits, Tetris Plus, Breakpoint, Krazy Ivan, Tunnel B1, Madden '97, Jewels of the Oracle.



ISSUE #16 FEB 97
Amazing Fighters MegaMix Coverage! 16 pages of small tips - it's all in here! Reviewed: Sonic 3D Blast, NFL Quarterback Club '97, NBA Jam Extreme, Toshinden URA, Tempest 2000, Batman Forever, Bug Too!, Dark Savior. Showcases: Bug Too! Tomb Raider guide part one!



ISSUE #17 MAR 97
Manx TT Exclusively Revealed! Reviewed: Die Hard Arcade, Crusader, Hexen, Die Hard Trilogy, Grid Run, Andretti Racing, Tilt, Soviet Strike. Showcases: Hexen, Soviet Strike, Fighters MegaMix, Die Hard Arcade. Tips: Tomb Raider part two. Exhumed Team Dolls!



ISSUE #18 APR 97
Duke Nukem 3D! Lobotomy interview! Reviewed: Manx TT, Area 51, "Incredible" Hulk, Norse by Norsewest, Iron Man/X-O Manowar, Mass Destruction, Spot Goes To Hollywood, MegaMan X3. Tips: Tomb Raider Conclusion, Dark Savior, Die Hard Trilogy. AM Annex Interviewed!



ISSUE #19 MAY 97
CD WITH DEMOS OF SONIC BLAST 3D, VIRTUAL ON AND DIE HARD ARCADE! World's First Quake Shots! Reviewed: Bomberman, Crypt Killer, FIFA '97, NBA Live '97, Dragonheart, Swagman, Puzzle Fighter, Space Jam, Return Fire. Tips: MegaMix part one, Die Hard Trilogy part two, Soviet Strike.



ISSUE #20 JUN 97
Last Bronx Revealed! More incredible Quake! Reviewed: Fighters MegaMix, King of Fighters 95, Pandemonium, Mr Bones, Mechwarrior 2, Scorcher, Shining the Holy Ark. Showcases: Pandemonium, Mechwarrior 2, Shining Holy Ark! Tips: MegaMix, Die Hard part three, Hexen part one.



ISSUE #21 JUL 97
WipEout 2097! Resident Evil/ Marvel Super Heroes exclusive! Reviewed: Jonah Lomu Rugby, Battlestations, ID4, Actua Soccer Club Edition, The Crow. Sonic Jam feature! Double AM3 interviews: arcade Top Skater, Last Bronx! Tips: Shining Holy Ark part one, MegaMix part three, Hexen part two!



ISSUE #22 AUG 97
Sonic R revealed! Special E3 Report! Reviewed: Sonic Jam, Dark Light Conflict, Dragon Force, WipEout 2097. Previews: Quake, Marvel Super Heroes! Showcased: Dragon Force, Last Bronx, WipEout 2097, Enormous Resident Evil guide! Tips: Hexen Final Part, Shining the Holy Ark Part 2.

Back Issues

HOW TO ORDER:

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SEGA SATURN

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COME AND GET ME!



Half the world is dead. A tyrannical despot has seized control of what has been described as the greatest power in the universe and to show his power, he has annihilated exactly one half of Creation.

So says Reed Richards, the country's leading scientific mind and founder member of the superhero group, the Fantastic Four. Speaking from their base at Four Freedoms Plaza, Mr Fantastic went on record to tell the remaining population that Earth's mightiest heroes - and villains - have banded together to launch a retaliatory strike against the creature known only as Thanos of Titan, an alien being whose sheer power even dwarfs that of the dread Galactus.

Attack strategy

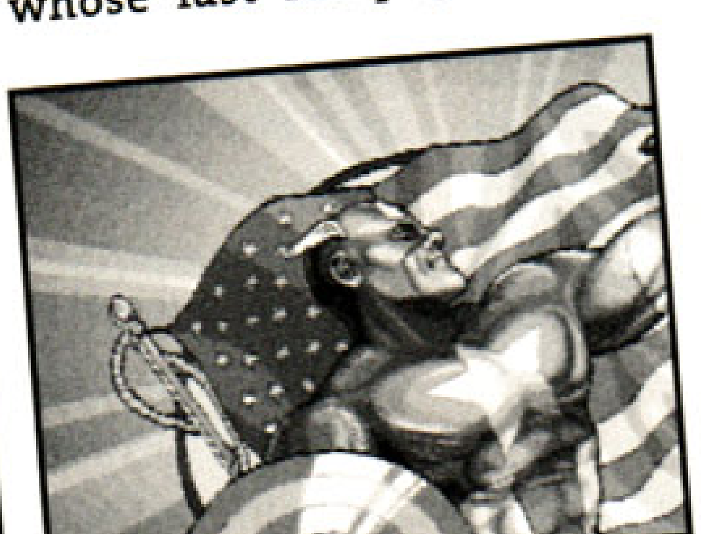
Staying on Earth to coordinate the planet's defenses, Richards provided details of the superbeings sent to battle Thanos.

"Representatives of the Avengers, including the Hulk, Iron Man and Captain America lead the task force, with a force of the remaining X-Men also providing support. Additionally, Spider-Man has lent his considerable talents to the team."

Supervillains

The arrival of a universe-threatening enemy has caused heroes and villains to have forgotten their differences... albeit temporarily. Mutant master of magnetism, Magneto, has joined the strike team saying that Thanos is a much a threat to mutant as his to man. Additionally the villainous Juggernaut, whose last rampage through Manhattan was stopped by Spider-Man, also joins the team.

Reed Richards is optimistic about the team-up, although his appeals to Latveria's monarch (and long-time Fantastic Four adversary) Doctor Doom appear to have fallen on deaf ears.





Captain America leads the Avengers into battle but will Doctor Doom join forces with the heroes or pursue his own agenda? *Photos: Peter Parker*

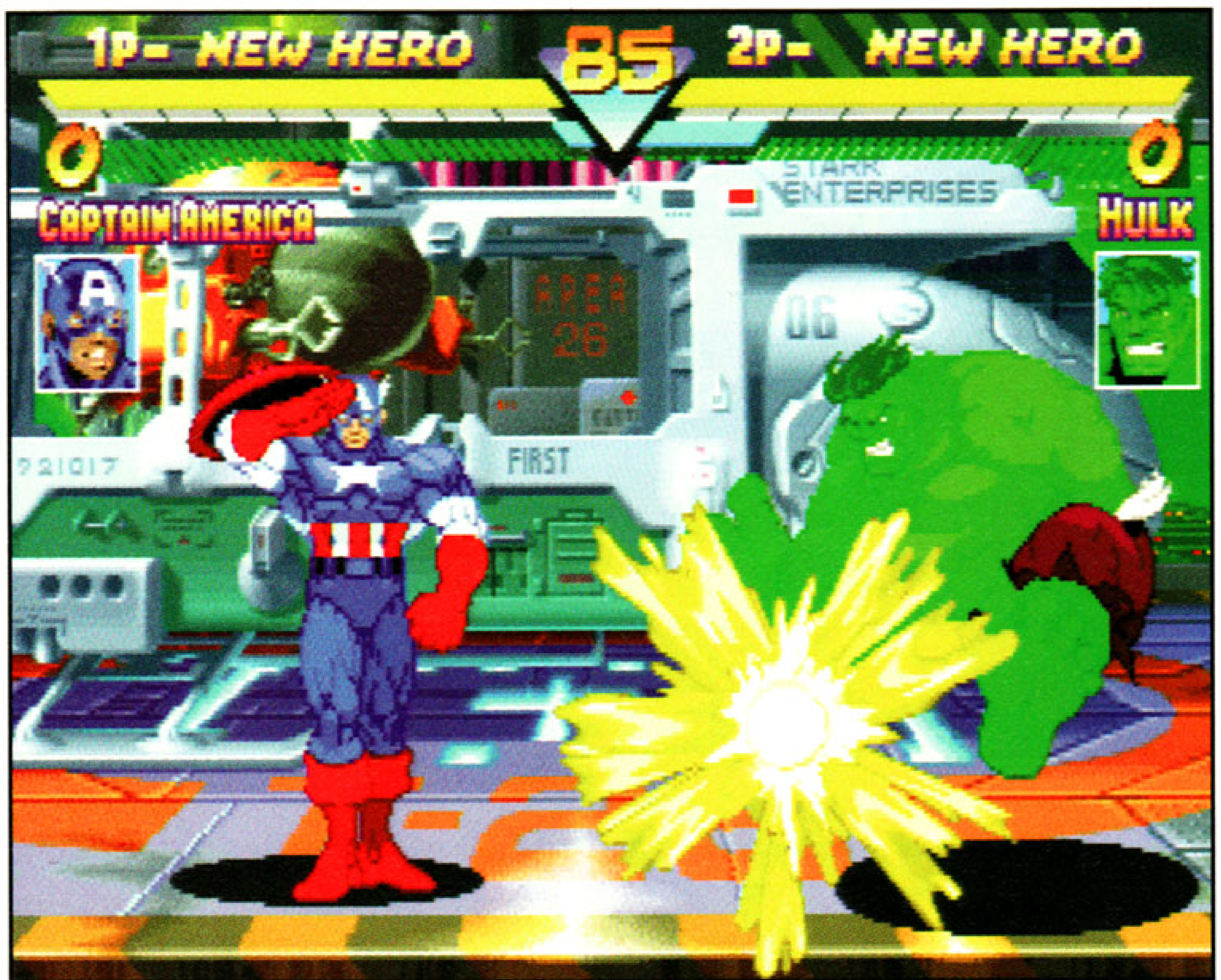


THE SPIDER-MAN MENACE!

EDITORIAL BY J JONAH JAMESON

SEE PAGE 10

Push down twice then both shoulder buttons to perform a taunt. Here's Cap's celebrated "Freedom Prevails!"

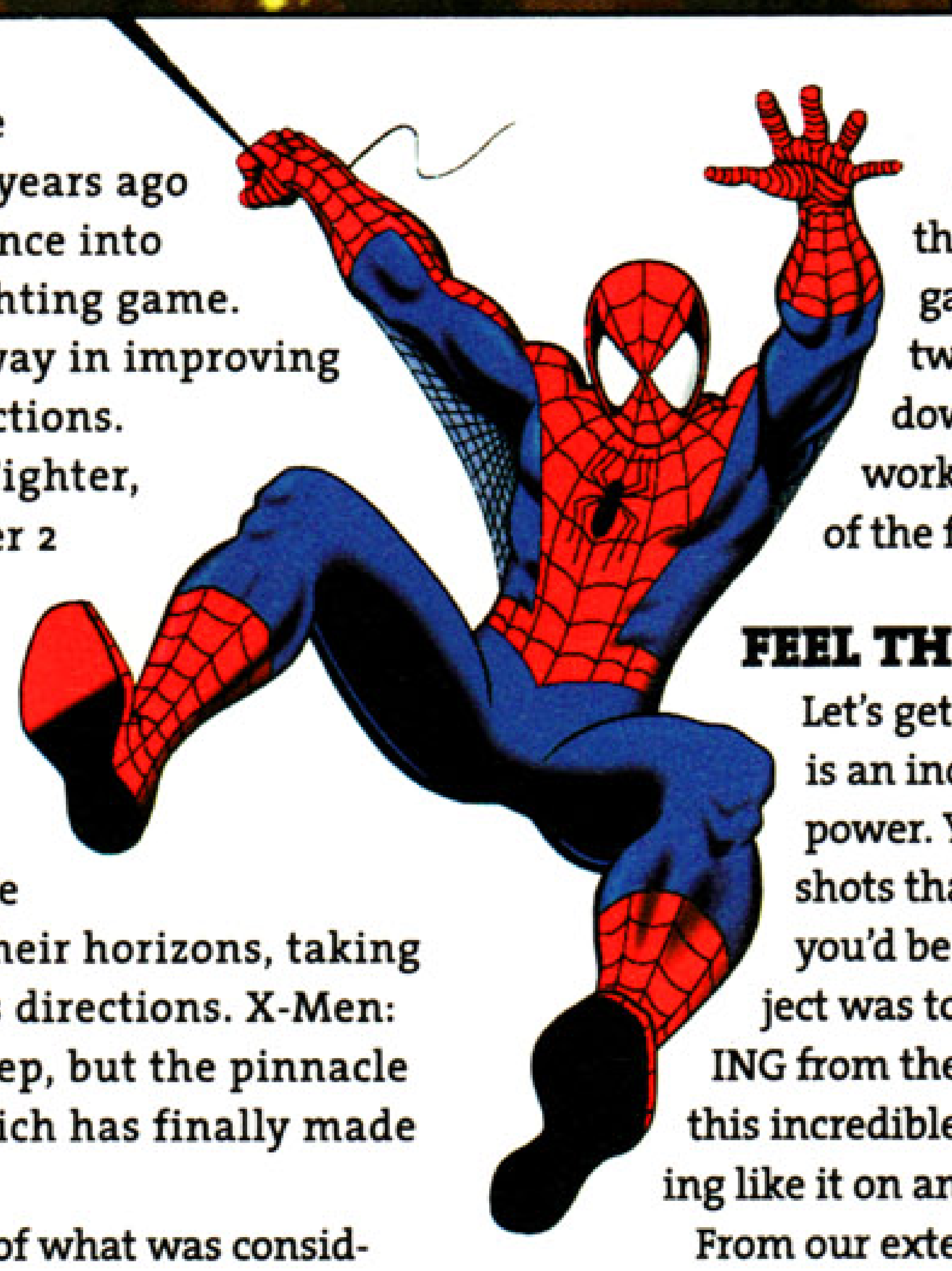




Super-human agility doesn't save Spidey from the power of a Juggy splash!







There's no point denying it - the release of Street Fighter 2 five years ago brought a new wave of excellence into the field of the one-on-one fighting game. And ever since, the company has led the way in improving the genre still further in two distinct directions.

The first direction was solely Street Fighter, culminating in the stunning Street Fighter 2 Alpha. Here the emphasis was firmly on technical excellence and sheer wealth of characters available.

The second approach was synonymous with Capcom's licensing deal with Marvel Comics. Bringing in larger than life characters, Capcom were able to expand their horizons, taking the Street Fighter gameplay in outrageous directions. X-Men: Children of the Atom was a superb first step, but the pinnacle of this remains Marvel Super Heroes... which has finally made it to the Sega Saturn!

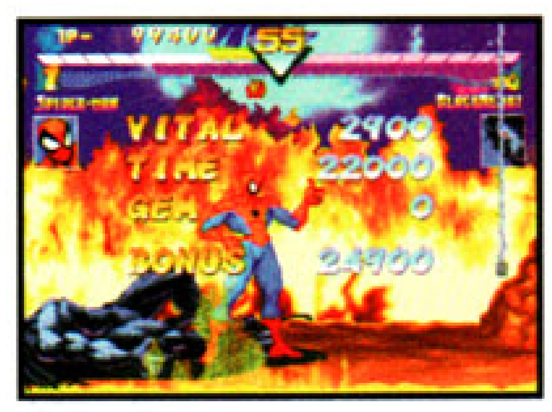
SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE took delivery of what was considered nigh-on complete code... until Capcom decided to push the release back three weeks. Speed issues have dogged the game since the beginning, and at this time two characters still manage to slow the game down, so they're currently being optimised to work at the same phenomenal speed as the rest of the fighters!

FEEL THE POWER!

Let's get one thing straight right away. The Saturn is an incredible machine with unprecedented 2D power. You might think from looking at our screenshots that we've cheekily used arcade pictures - you'd be wrong. Capcom's entire aim with this project was to create a game that compromises NOTHING from the arcade original. The visual excellence of this incredible game WILL blow your mind. There is nothing like it on any other home system.

From our extended playtests, it appears that Capcom >>

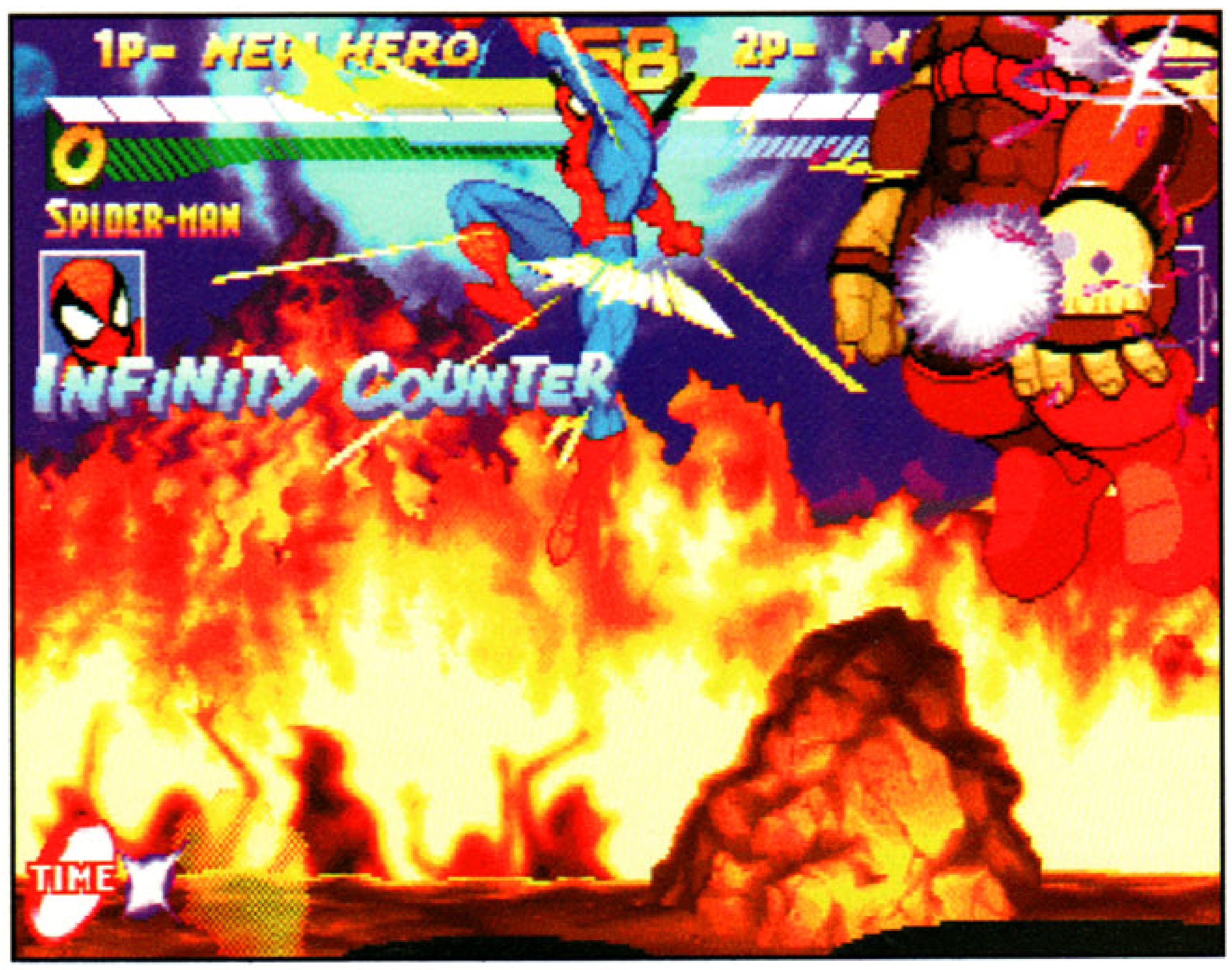




The usual awesome Capcom presentation. Mega!



Cap chains any attack into a stronger one (like weak punch into mid kick into heavy punch).

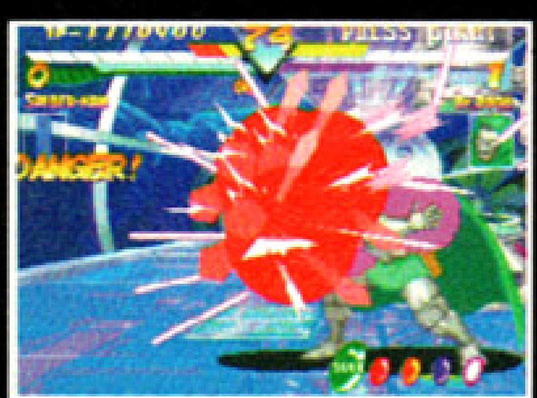


Infinity counters are great for finishing off desperate attackers with little or no energy!

BOSS: DOCTOR DOOM



Perhaps the greatest villain in the history of comicdom, Victor Von Doom is the deadly nemesis of the Fantastic Four, although he's often mixed it up with (and beaten) the likes of the X-Men, Avengers and Spider-Man. A man twisted by the dark side of science and sorcery, Doom's agenda is to steal as much power as possible. In the past he has controlled the Power Cosmic (stolen from the Silver Surfer)





and for a time possessed power incarnate when he half-inched the Beyonder's powers. Now he's after omnipotence itself in the form of the Infinity Gauntlet.

As an opponent, Doom is adept in combination attacks, but you really need to watch out for the attacks he produces from his armour - unstoppable bolts of power, lasers, you name it. Doom's Molecular Expander (which produces flying rocks out of thin air) also makes an appearance.





Even the "non"-special moves provide spectacular visuals!

>> have pulled out all of the stops to make Marvel Super Heroes its most ambitious conversion to date. It is, quite frankly, a revelation!

CREATE-A-COMBO RETURNS!

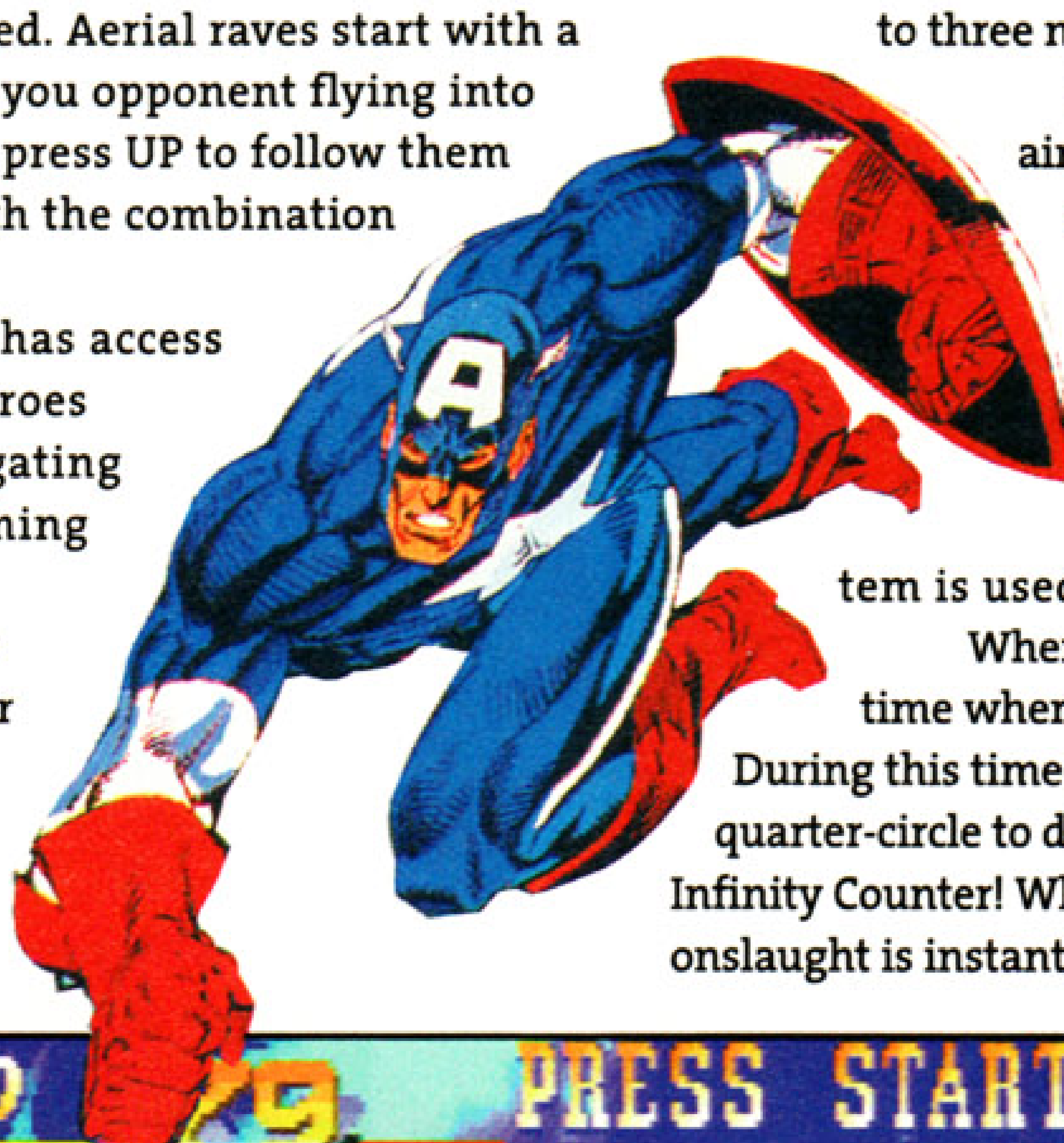
The big, big, difference between the Marvel games and the Street Fighter ones is in the way combination attacks are used. Street Fighter's a lot more fussy technically, whereas in Marvel the hits just ram on in without that much effort. Marvel Super Heroes also includes aerial combinations (or aerial raves, as they're known)- something not seen in Street Fighter. These are kind of like Mortal Kombat's juggle combos, albeit far more advanced. Aerial raves start with a move on the ground that sends you opponent flying into the air, whereupon you instant press UP to follow them into the air. Now you let rip with the combination of your choice!

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has access to the official Marvel Super Heroes guide book, so we'll be investigating this in more depth in an upcoming players guide.

Chain combinations are also more pronounced in Marvel Super Heroes (although the system is used in Street Fighter too). Some characters can chain whole series of hits together with no







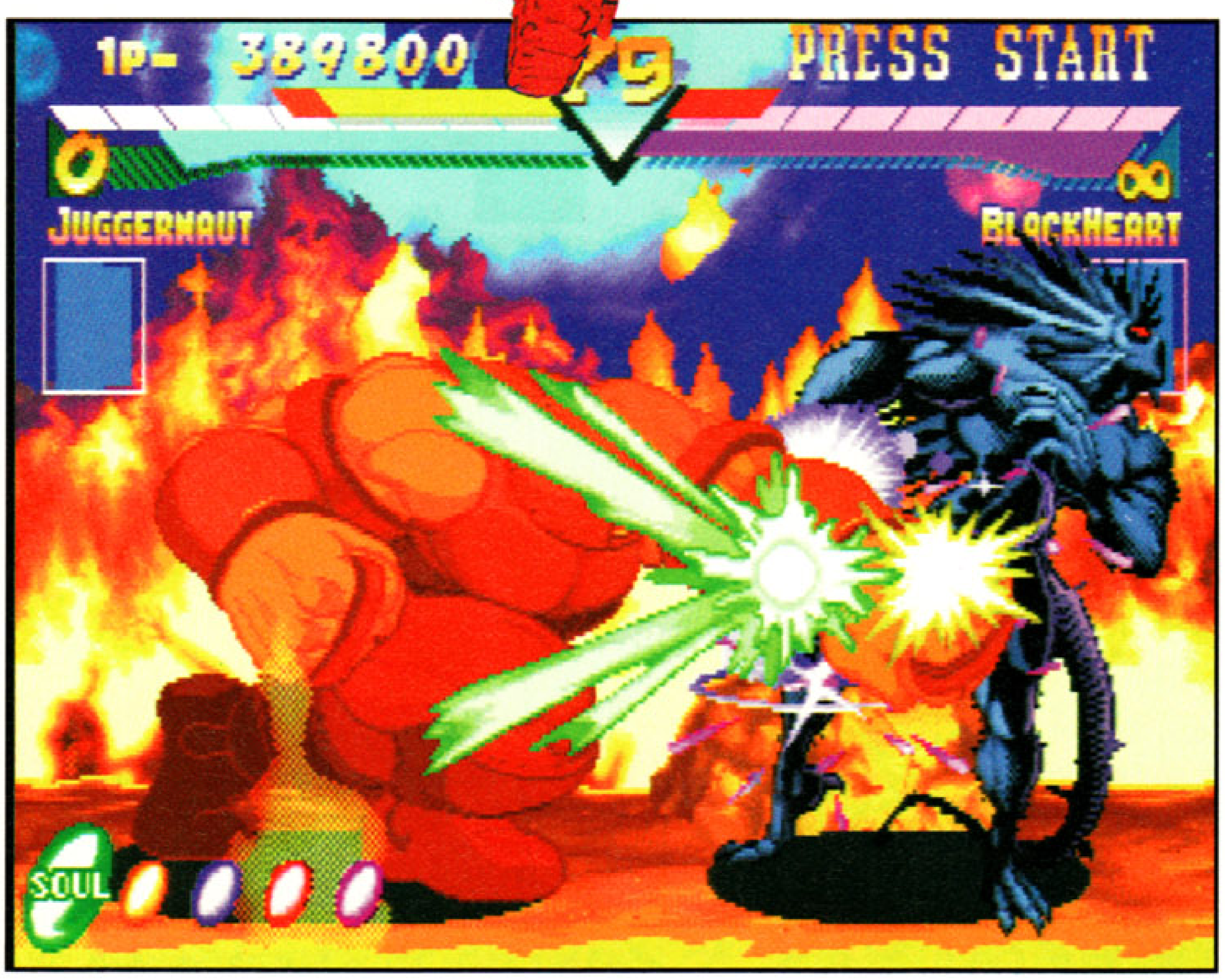
problem. For example, Spider-Man and Captain America (to name but two) but chain any attack with a stronger punch or kick for up to three multiple hits.

It sounds complex, but in actual fact, Capcom's aim with Marvel has been to make combos a lot simpler for novices to perform and a lot more spectacular for experts to perform...

TO INFINITY... AND BEYOND!

Street Fighter Alpha introduced the concept of counters and a version of the same system is used in Marvel Super Heroes.

When you block an attack there is always a space of time where your character is immobile for a short while. During this time period, push the d-pad from back through a quarter-circle to down. Then press punch. This activates Marvel's Infinity Counter! What this basically means is that your attacker's onslaught is instantly broken and you retaliate with a special move







The sheer size of the sprites in Marvel Super Heroes should be enough to REALLY blow you away - Juggernaut in particular is ace!

THE INFINITY GEMS

This all-new addition to the Capcom fighting series is exclusive to Marvel Super Heroes - it has never appeared in any form on any of their other fighting games. There are five gems to collect, each with different properties. They tend to appear after damaging attacks or combinations strike home. Additionally, gems collected by your opponent can be knocked out of them using much the same technique. Gems each perform a certain function, but each character has a "special" gem that produces even more special powers!

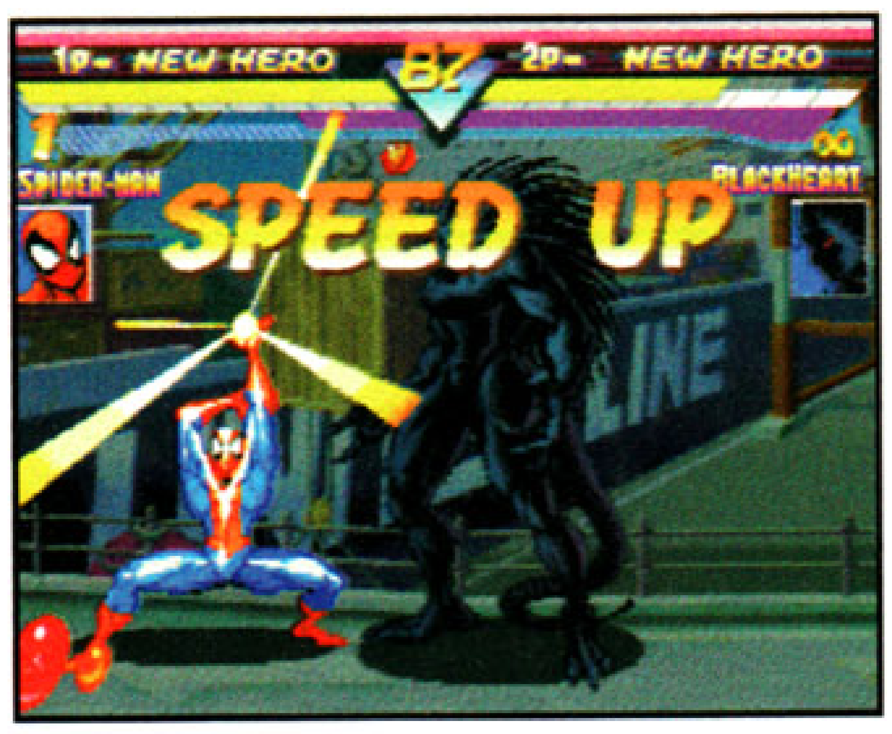
But still, the gems are:



REALITY Once in possession of a powered reality gem, weird things start to happen as the fabric of what is suddenly comes apart. Ice shards appearing from nowhere is one such phenomena.



POWER No prizes for guessing what happens here. The power gem provides extra clobbering might for your fighter, so if you've chosen the Hulk or the Juggernaut... ouch!



TIME A gem that apparently allows you complete control over time has been translated into a simple speed-up in the game! That basically means faster movement and quicker attacks.



SOUL Obviously spiritual matters don't really count for much in a one-on-one fighting game eh? That being the case, the soul gem has a life-recovering effect, topping up your energy bar.



SPACE Hmmmm. Perhaps we're getting just a tad desperate here. The space gem covers your fighter with a mystical energy barrier, which deadens the impact of your enemy's attacks.



MIND The mind gem is pretty similar to the soul bauble, but with one pretty important exception. Whereas the soul gem restore life energy, this one boosts the level of your infinity bar.

(it's different for each character). It drains Infinity Energy (that's your Super Bar to all intents and purposes) so it does postpone your use of your super attack and normal players will only really use it to counter an opponent with really low energy, scoring a knock-out.Expert players who don't use super moves so much will probably favour the Infinity Counter because it isn't so easy to time properly.the broken corpse of his opponent.





Cap taking down Doom single-handedly (above)? Only in a videogame, for sure.







NEXT MONTH

The Marvel coverage continues with a look at the final Japanese code, news on the PAL release, plus character profiles for Blackheart, Shuma Gorath, Magneto, Psylocke, Iron Man and Magento! Suffice to say, it's going to be unmissable!

BOSS: THANOS



The reason the Infinity Wars are taking place is because of the mad schemes of one Thanos of Titan. Resurrected from the grave, Thanos fell in love with Death - the mysterious woman in charge of the afterlife. Seeking to win her favour, Thanos annihilated half of the life in the galaxy, but still she was unmoved.

That being the case, Thanos has decided to take on any challenge in the cosmos, stripping himself of most of the Infinity Gems' power in order to make it a fair contest.

As an opponent, Thanos is not just tough - he's nigh-on unbeatable. Since he has possession of the Infinity Gauntlet, he gets his choice of Super Move. For him, each gem used pro-



duces an immensely damaging attack! Truly he is a boss worthy of the awesome game that is Marvel Super Heroes.

SHOWCASE



Smack an asteroid on anyone and they're down. Shuma Gorath included!

THE INCREDIBLE HULK





INFINITY GEM Time
COMMAND ⇩⬃⇦ with all three punches together
The Hulk's speed-up is immensely useful in that it does much more than simply speed him up – you get extra hits per move too.



INFINITY ATTACK Gamma Crush
COMMAND ⇩⬂⇨ with all three punches together
The best super in the world ever! Hulk jumps up into the stratosphere, grabs a nearby asteroid and smashes it on his opponent's head! Ouch.



SPECIAL MOVE Gamma Charge
COMMAND Hold ⇦ then ⇨ with any kick
Hulk's awesome charge across the screen is difficult to stop, great to look at and inflicts huge damage levels! Devastating!



SPECIAL MOVE Vertical Gamma Charge
COMMAND Hold ⇩then ⇧ with any kick button
This is basically a vertical version of the Gamma Charge, although you can charge again in mid-air, inflicting even more damage!

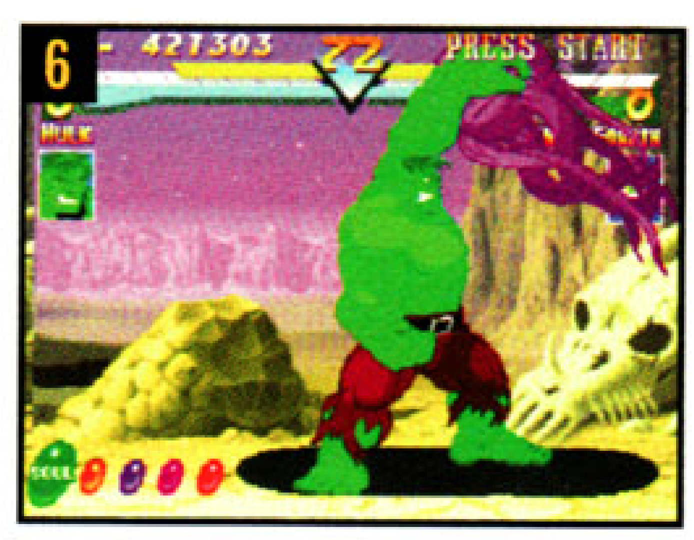
Real Name: Robert Bruce Banner
Occupation: Scientist
Special Powers: Immeasurable superhuman strength, Invulnerability
Origin of Powers: Exposure to gamma radiation
Paraphernalia: None

One thing that acts as a signature to the Capcom Marvel games are the HUGE sprites... enter the Hulk! This guy is BIG and although slow, his moves look so utterly spectacular, you've just got to sit down and become adept with using this particular character!

All of the Hulk's trademark moves from the comics (including his signature sonic boom clap!) have made it into Capcom's rendition of the character, along with what is perhaps the company's greatest ever super move!



SPECIAL MOVE Ground Chuck
COMMAND ⇦⬃⇩⬂⇨ with any punch button
Ripping up the ground and throwing it at his opposition, this move is a pretty decent Hulk attack. Of course, it's best used at range, although ripping ground into a foe's face is amusing...



SPECIAL MOVE Gamma Tornado
COMMAND ⇨⬂⇩⬃⇦ with any punch button
Hulk garbs hold of his opponent by the head no less, spins him (or her) around for a bit and lets 'em fly! A pretty powerful manoeuvre, but hard to execute.

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN











INFINITY GEM Power
COMMAND ⇩⬃⇦ with all three punches together
Power is Spidey's special gem. Once activated, another mirror image web slinger appears on screen. Now you hit for double damage!

INFINITY ATTACK Maximum Spider
COMMAND ⇩⬂⇨ with all three punches together
Spidey powers up an awesome ricocheting punching attack, rebounding off the edge of the screen and pouring on multiple hits!

SPECIAL MOVE Spider Sting
COMMAND ⇨⇩⬂ with any punch
Essentially a Dragon Punch, although pressing punch again once in the air causes Spider-Man to punch again (catching any one who follows him up!). A very cool move.

SPECIAL MOVE Web Ball
COMMAND ⇩⬂⇨ with any punch
Sticky globules of webbing fire out from Spider-Man's wrist, temporarily webbing a foe up on contact. Get in quick or they'll easily escape. It does small amounts of damage.

Real Name: Peter Parker
Occupation: Student/ Freelance Photographer
Special Powers: Superhuman strength, speed and agility. Sticks to walls. Spider-sense warns him of danger.
Origin of Powers: Bite from Radioactive Spider
Paraphernalia: One web shooter attached to each wrist.

Perhaps the star character of Marvel Super Heroes. Although his special moves and infinity attacks aren't the best or the most spectacular, Capcom have paid particular attention to Spider-Man's fighting style. His blinding speed and agility (Capcom have added speed blurs to the movements of his limbs) result in a character who seemingly inflicts more hits on an opponent than your eyes can register! In terms of combination attacks, he's second to none, and difficult to counter against once he's warmed up!





SPECIAL MOVE Web Throw
COMMAND ⇨⬂⇩⬃⇦ with any punch
A slow move, but if it connects, Spidey swings his opponent above his head before chucking them away at speed. It's a very cool move and you can aim the web in three different directions.

SPECIAL MOVE Web Swing
COMMAND ⇩⬃⇦ with any kick
Spidey swings through the air on his web-line (which mysteriously sticks on thin air like the sixties cartoon). Awesome for avoiding Infinity attacks and great for tagging onto combos. It has a slow recovery time though.

Spidey's wiped the floor with Blackheart before... Here's an encore performance!


























Cap matches up to Spidey and emerges victorious! Freedom prevails - thumbs up soldier!

CAPTAIN AMERICA: SUPER PATRIOT!





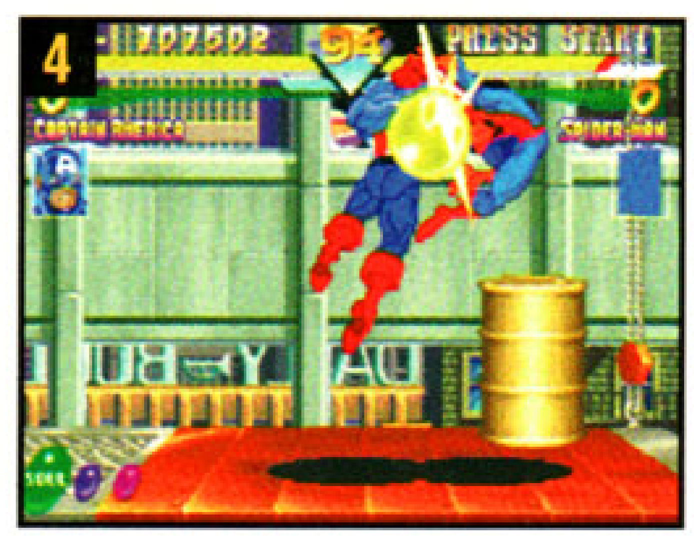
INFINITY GEM Power
COMMAND ↓↙← with all punches
As well as increasing the power of Captain America's attacks, shadows also appear around the Avenger and these add extra hits to each strike. Pretty devastating stuff...



INFINITY ATTACK Final Justice
COMMAND ↓↘→ with all punches
Should Captain America hit with his charge, he inflicts multiple hits on his opponent before jumping into the air with them and crashing them down head first. Very powerful...



SPECIAL MOVE Shield Slash
COMMAND ↓↘→ with any punch
The punch button used dictates where Cap's going to throw his shield (you can choose from one of three directions). Additionally, the move can be used in mid-air.



SPECIAL MOVE Stars and Stripes
COMMAND →↓↘ with any punch
Cap's Dragon Punch equivalent is pretty powerful, but like a few of his moves, you get extra hits if NOT carring the shield! Pretty bizarre, but true nonetheless.

Real Name: Steve Rogers
Occupation: Adventurer
Special Powers: Peak human stregth, speed, agility.
Origin of Powers: Super-Soldier Serum
Paraphernalia: Indestructible shield

A World War II superhero, Captain America was thrown into a state of suspended animation at the end of the conflict and revived decades later by the superteam he would eventually lead - the Avengers!

Captain America is definitely the Ryu-style model for Marvel Super Heroes, albeit with a few more moves added in. However, whereas Ryu specialises in fireballs, Cap prefers to throw his indestructible shield about. And where Ryu had his hurricane kick, the star-spangled adventurer tends to favour charging at his foes behind his shield.

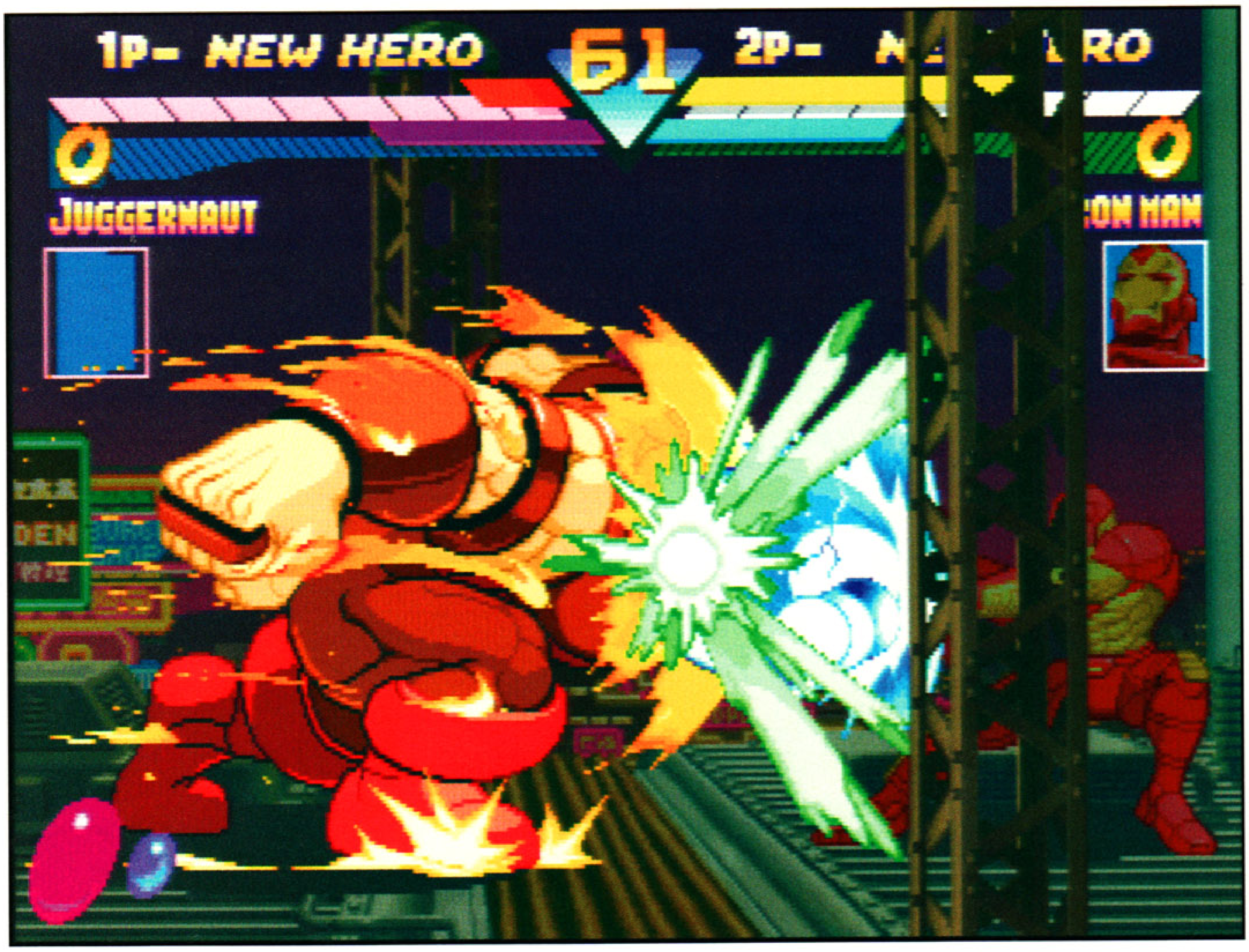


SPECIAL MOVE Charging Stars
COMMAND ←↙↓↘→ with any kick
A great move - Cap can charge through any opponent's projectile attack and ram home for really decent damage levels!This move is probably the best use of Cap's indestructible shield. And you get a cool speed blur.



SPECIAL MOVE Cartwheel
COMMAND →↘↓↙← with any punch button
The move everyone forgets. This is actually really cool, as Cap cartwheels around any opponent or projectile when in range. A great alternative to the Infinity counter!

THE UNSTOPPABLE JUGGERNAUT



Juggernaut smacks the crap out of Cap, before stomping on his nether regions...












INFINITY GEM Space
COMMAND ⇩⇨⇦ with all punches
The space gem endows the Juggernaut with invulnerability. His armour becomes totally indestructible. And turns grey to boot. Use the Cytorrak power too and attack!



X-ATTACK Juggernaut Headcrush
COMMAND ⇩⇦⇨ with all punches
Charging across the screen, Juggernaut's rampage is swift and extremely damaging. Get on the wrong end of this and you're in deep trouble! Absolutely brilliant.



SPECIAL MOVE Juggernaut Punch
COMMAND ⇦⇨⇩⇦⇨ with any punch button
An enormous great charging punch that sends an opponent flying an entire screen-length away! Terrific Juggy power!



SPECIAL MOVE Juggernaut Splash
COMMAND ⇦⇨⇩⇦⇨ with any kick
A new move (not seen in X-Men: COTA), Juggernaut flies up into the air and lands belly first on the opponent. Very damaging indeed, particular when used with the power gem.

Real Name: Cain Marko
Occupation: Super-villain
Special Powers: Vast superhuman strength, invulnerability, cannot be stopped
Origin of Powers: Cytorrak Crystal
Paraphernalia: Helmet and armour deaden psychic attacks

Regular tangles with the likes of the X-Men, Hulk and Spider-Man make Juggernaut one of the most battle-hardened villains in the Marvel Universe. He can certainly take the damage thanks to the mystic power of the Cytorrak gem. In common with Hulk, Juggernaut is slow, but immensely powerful. To differentiate the characters, Juggy is more suited to soaking up the damage than the Hulk is. He's also just a lot nastier (stamping on his opponents when they're down and what have you). A powerhouse!



SPECIAL MOVE Double Fist Thrust
COMMAND ⇨ with fierce punch
Juggernaut builds up his strength and concentrates it into one single, devastating double-power punch!This can seemingly absorb damage too. Juggy still feels it, but it doesn't stop him!



SPECIAL MOVE Earthquake
COMMAND ⇨⇩⇦ with any punch
Clasping his hands together, Juggernaut strikes the ground, causing near seismic levels of ground disturbance.You get even more damage if Juggy's fists hit the opponent.



The Evil has landed!

Being drip-fed information on Capcom's forthcoming Resident Evil for what seems like an eternity, we've finally received a finished version of the game complete with the long-rumoured Saturn enhancements. After being shrouded in secrecy for several months, LEE NUTTER takes an exclusive look at what's new in Resident Evil.



Take a look at this month's exclusive Resident Evil review and it becomes apparent that Capcom's foray into the realms of 3D have been every bit as successful as its Saturn 2D classics. Awarded a massive 94%, the Saturn version features all-new enhancements not seen in either the PlayStation original or the recent PC version. In fact, so impressed were we with what Capcom have added to the Saturn rendition of Resident Evil, that we've dedicated this mini-showcase especially to revealing them in their full splendour.

BATTLE MODE

One of the few disappointing aspects of the original PlayStation Resident Evil was that, despite a wealth of secrets and non-linear gameplay, there was a distinct lack of replay value in the game. Once players completed the game as both Chris and Jill, there was little to entice them to tackle this atmospheric adventure again. Capcom themselves appear to have recognised this shortcoming and have made a clear attempt with the Saturn version to address this problem. Hence, the all-new Battle Mode.

This is possibly the most exciting addition to the Saturn version of Resident Evil and only becomes available once players have successfully completed the regular game as either of the two STARS operatives. The special mini-game ditches the complex strategy and puzzle elements of the regular game in favour of pure, hardcore blasting action. Taking control of the character with which the game has been completed, players begin the battle game in the relative safety of the save room. Therein, the familiar storage trunk is found containing a wealth of weapons and ammo which are plundered for the impending battle. Once players are fully







armed, the basic idea is to progress through the 15 different scenarios relentlessly blasting a continuous onslaught of monsters.

Success at the tough battle game is derived from effective use of the limited supply of weapons and ammo, with players being required to select the most appropriate weapon with which to destroy a diverse range of creatures. For instance, when faced with a pack of ravenous dogs, though the Colt is a more powerful weapon, the shotgun proves more effective as the wide-ranging shards of lead often take down several canines at a time.

As operatives are only capable of carrying a limited number of items at any given time, players are afforded the opportunity to revisit the save room sanctuary and further replenish their depleted ammo supply. However, as the supply of ammo and weapons are very limited, frivolous blasting rapidly leads to players running out of ammunition, leaving operatives with only a puny combat knife for defence. Players are then ranked upon completion or demise in a leader board according to items used, clear time and remaining energy, adding a score attack element to Resident Evil. Awesome!





The all-new Battle Mode in full effect. With a tight time limit and few weapons, players need true skill to obtain a decent ranking.



NEW MONSTERS

Well, sort of. Though several nightmare creatures not seen in other versions of Resident Evil make an appearance in the Saturn game,





clearly Capcom were being economical with the truth when they announced "new monsters." To be more specific, the long-rumoured new monsters are in fact redesigned versions of existing ones. During the regular game for instance, players who manage to survive the horrors of the mansion and escape into the under-ground sewers are confronted by the first of the new monsters. Being a redesigned version of the lethal Hunters, or perhaps a genetic mutation of the original species, the new monster acts with similar deadly tendencies but looks quite different. As for the other new monsters, players encounter a zombified version of the treacherous Captain Wesker and an ultra-hard Tyrant boss in the all-new Battle Mode.



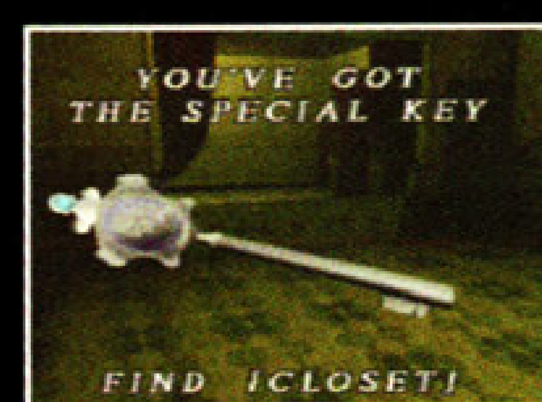
The all-new monster which lurks in the sewers underneath the mansion is a variation on the deadly Hunters. The creature leaps about when attacking its prey, severing limbs with its ultra-sharp claws.





NEW COSTUMES

Yep. In the PlayStation version of Resident Evil, once the game had been completed properly, players were rewarded with a special key allowing them access to a previously inaccessible closet. Contained inside were a change of costume for each of the characters: a boob-tube for Jill and a Harley Davidson leather jacket for Chris. Obviously, with the secrets of the PS version having been revealed for sometime now, there'd be little point in putting exactly the same extras in the Saturn version. So each of the characters in the Saturn game has a new change of costume awaiting them once the game is properly completed. Admittedly, it's an inherently useless secret and for cosmetic value only, but most welcome nevertheless.



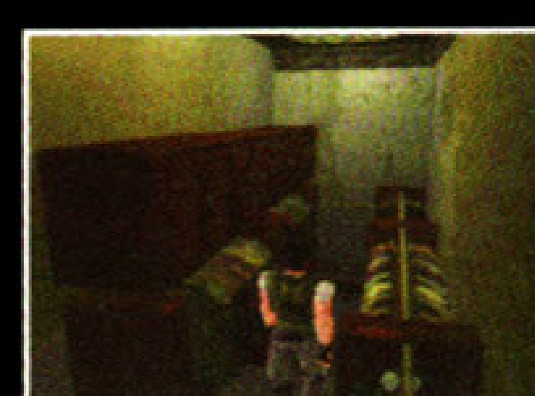
Players who manage to complete the regular game and rescue the hostages, are rewarded with a special key allowing access to a very special closet...

WHAT ELSE?

Aside from the changes already outlined, the Saturn version of Resident Evil features improved loading times, especially on the save game screens allowing for quicker saves, more detail in the backgrounds and a second Tyrant boss. Aaaaaaarrrghhh!

Resident Evil is reviewed on page 74.









Located in the secret closet is an all-new change of costume for each character.

THUNDER... THUNDER... THUNDER THUNDERFORCE – HO!





Land, sea, air and space! ThunderForce V features battles everywhere!





ThunderForce is back and it's better than ever! Technosoft's greatest software series ever has finally hit the Sega Saturn... and it's a corker. Here, RICH LEADBETTER reports.

The game that finally made me cough up the money for my first games console since the Atari VCS was ThunderForce III on the Megadrive. As far as I was concerned (being a humble Amiga owner at the time), this was the dog's bollocks. Arcade fast and graphically amazing, this mind-boggling software was just the sort of thing I'd been after. The rest, as they say, was history.

So it was a particular interest that I booted up ThunderForce V - Technosoft's first outing since Megadrive TFIV so many years ago. Could the company perform similar wonders with the Saturn?



Inside the enemy's computerised base, the sprites are reduced to their component pixels by laser fire!

Well, it has to be said, that initially the answer is no. The first two levels of TFV could so easily have been in the Megadrive predecessor that I was instantly annoyed. Still, I persevered and what I was playing later was frankly mind-boggling - a true follow-up to the games series that I hold so dear!

2D MEETS 3D

The clever thing about ThunderForce V is the way that it seamlessly combines 2D elements and 3D polygon pokery. Backgrounds are generally 2D, although enough polygon style objects are introduced to give each stage a real sense of depth. Additionally, the bigger enemy sprites and indeed the bosses are also polygon constructs, allowing the programmers to switch camera angles on occasion to produce some seriously impressive visuals. Not bad eh? Additionally, every 2D effect in the Saturn's repertoire has been brought to the fore during the levels, with levels three onwards producing senses-shattering visuals that couldn't be done on any other home system!

SO WHAT'S GOING ON EH?

You might think that with a hardcore game like this in Japan, Sega Europe would be well on the way to signing up the rights





ThunderForce's weaponry is frankly brilliant. It always has been through the history of the series and the new game doesn't disappoint!



The Free Range lock-on system is innovative - and utterly destroys the enemy!



Yes, you get to take on an entire fleet of enemy battle cruisers.



The ThunderForce series is synonymous with absolutely brilliant graphics and although the early levels are quite poor, later on it's just utterly amazing!



It's been ages since the Saturn had a really hardcore shooting game appear in its hallowed catalogue, but suffice to say that Thunderforce V truly delivers in style!

AIM! FIRE!

ThunderForce has always had spectacular weapons. Most of them you would have seen before, but the Saturn's advanced technical trickery allows for some seriously cool effects! One really great addition is super-firepower. You can draw out energy from your Craw multiples and channel it into your basic weapon, allowing for some serious pyrotechnical displays!



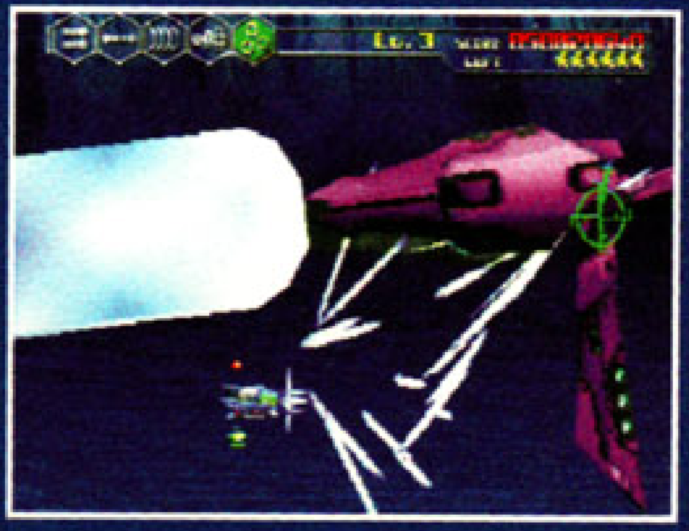

FORWARD FIRING This says what it means - all firepower from your ship and your craws are directed to the front weapons arrays. The super version of the weapon unleashes concentrated lightning!




WAVE A forward-firing weapon, the wave shoots ahead of the ship, encompassing everything in its path (even firing through solid rock). It's not very powerful at all, but its coverage is superb. Super charge merely ups the damage potential.




FREE RANGE A new, very good weapon. Your ship's movement changes the direction of its targeting scanners. Hold down B to lock direction and automatically fire at any thing that gets in the green beams!

HUNTER Pretty much what you would expect from a guided weapons system. This fires off a huge amount of plasma orbs, which automatically home in on the opposition. They're not very powerful though.



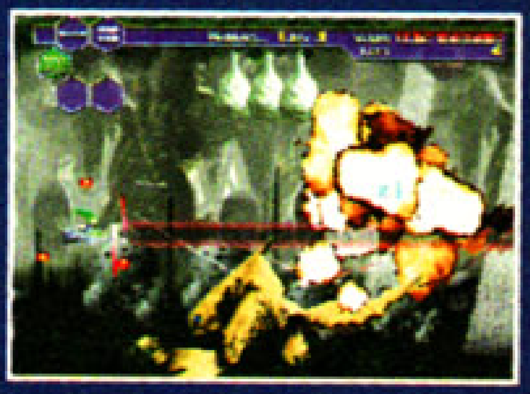

CRAW The Craws are the multiples that circle around your ship. They fire when you fire and provide some protection against enemy fire. Their best use, however, is as an energy base for your super weaponry.




REVERSE FIRE Switching to rear fire can be essential considering that the enemy don't mind where they spring up from! A small amount of fire still comes out of the front (just in case), but everything else is shot behind.

>> and bringing it out over here, right? Wrong. The firm took a look at a preproduction version of the game and decided they wouldn't release it. Far be it for me to question the high and mighty, but this is a mistake. If their unfinished copy only had the first couple of levels I could see their point, but seriously, this is a cool game. Perhaps the company should take a look at the finished software and reconsider their position? Go on, you know it makes sense!







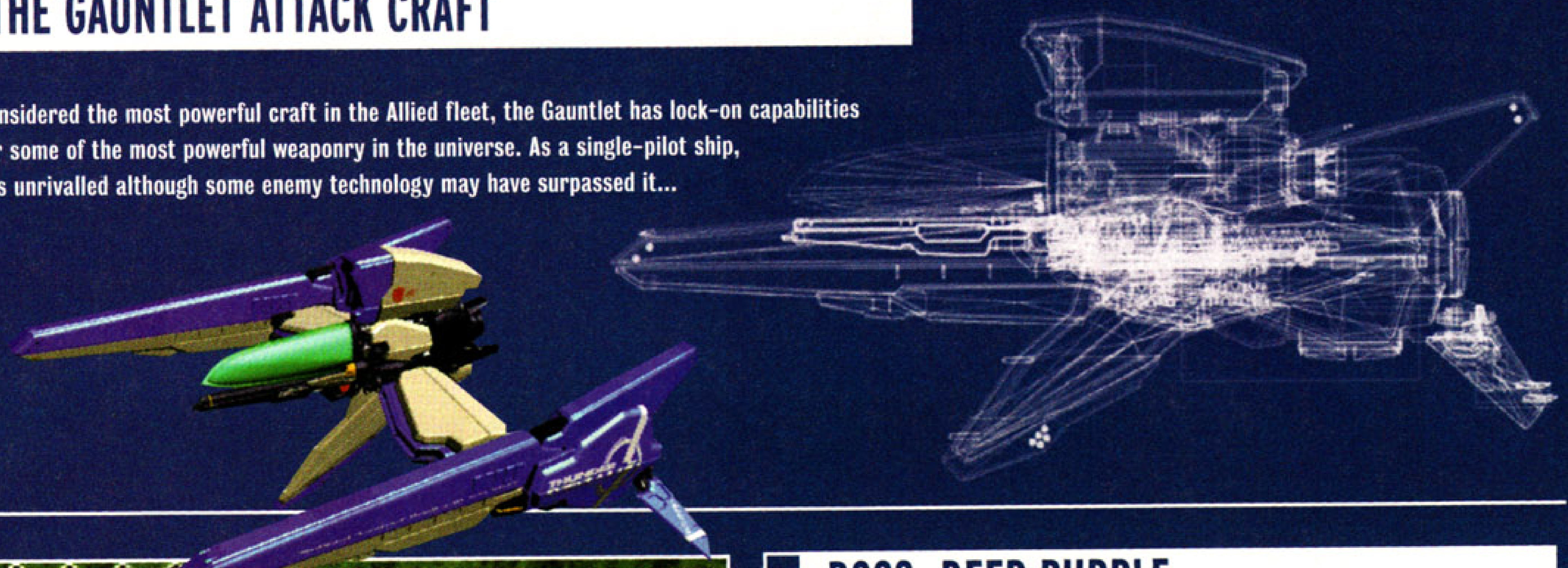




Would you believe it? ThunderForce V, although really excellent, hasn't been signed up by Sega Europe yet! To be honest, no-one else would license it, so we officially beg Sega to re-consider!

THE GAUNTLET ATTACK CRAFT

Considered the most powerful craft in the Allied fleet, the Gauntlet has lock-on capabilities for some of the most powerful weaponry in the universe. As a single-pilot ship, it's unrivalled although some enemy technology may have surpassed it...







The Gauntlet's weapons systems are many and varied with all of them design to cover every attack and defensive situation.

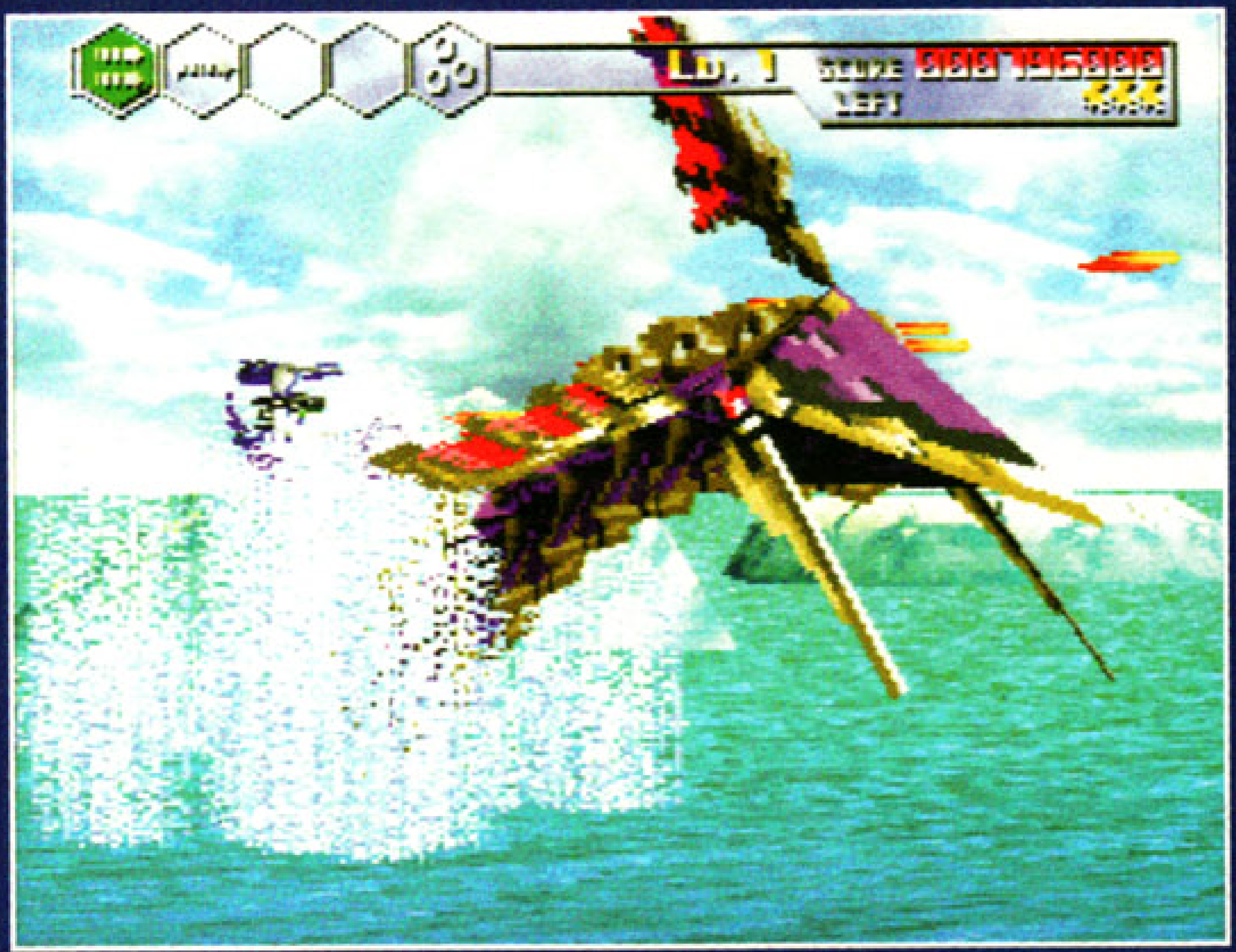


STAGE 1: NO BLUE

This old town was submerged under the water years ago, so whilst the level begins in the blue skies above water, you're quickly submerging into the depths, picking your way carefully through the ruins. The challenge here is a mixture of biological creations as well as the old town's antiquated defences. A really cool effect is where you near the surface of the water and can see the sky through the water.



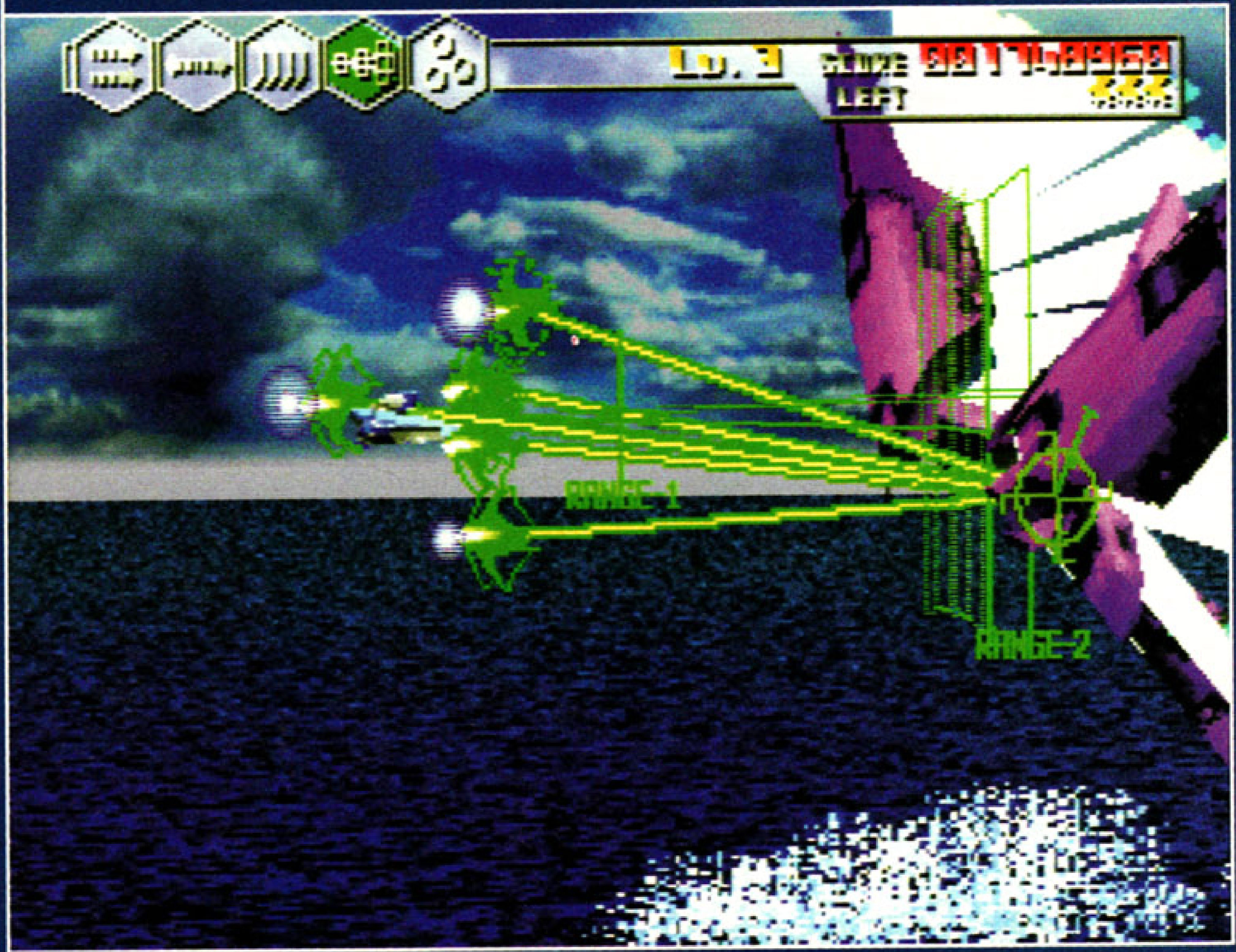


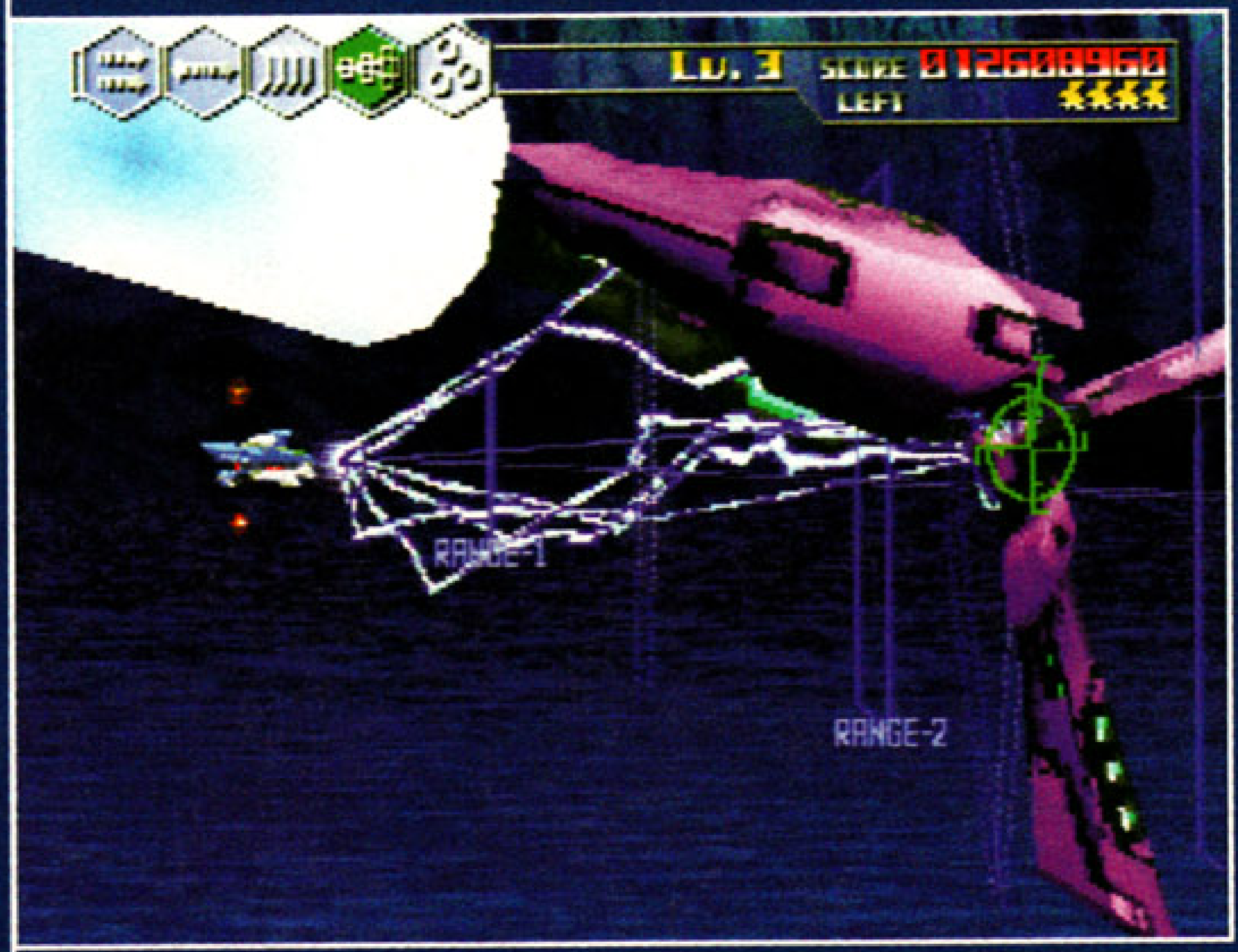


Shades of ThunderForce IV on the first level, pictured here, before confronting the so-called "Iron Maiden" boss!

BOSS: DEEP PURPLE

"I saw the messenger of the New God there"
Weak Point: Body, Wing Arm
Weapons: Large particle charger cannon, four laser tracking cannons, guided torpedoes, Laser Vulcan, Active laser cannon.
Notes: Taking the form of a manta-ray, quickly morphing into a giant bird, its weak spots are quickly identified and exploited - if you can avoid the enormous laser cannon! Blast it into pieces once and it takes form again under water! Follow and finish it!





Once Iron Maiden is underwater, dodge its cannon and let rip with a Super!





Over water, the Iron Maiden is at its most powerful. Destroy the winged beast and finish off the remains!





You just can't argue with the quality of ThunderForce's visuals – from level three onwards you're treated to quality graphics the likes of which you'll never have seen before on the Saturn!



Lock on to the beast and let rip with all firepower. This stage looks suspiciously like Panzer Zwei eh readers?

STAGE 2: THE WOOD

After a quick airborne attack, your craft dives down through the tree cover and through the forest undergrowth proper. It was here that the enemy began their bio-mechanical experiments, and most of them are still to be found during the course of this level. Of great note are several enormous creatures, such as a cyber-gorilla, all animated with hundreds of sprites, providing a brilliant spectacle.



Lock on the enormous plant and open fire with everything you have.



The pods at the top release deadly gas if shot down.

BOSS: IRON MAIDEN

"She was dead, but alive at the same time"
Weak Point: Body
Weapons: Living tissue microwave convergence, two cannons, egg chamber, bomb developed inside living body.
Notes: Based on crustacean lifeforms, this is surrounded by a tough-to-crack armour, which needs to be peeled away before attacking the body. Has a tendency to charge at you, so dodging and turning to reverse firepower is helpful.





The wave weapon has excellent coverage – you can't miss its weak point!



Aha! Success! The boss has been exploded. Quite spectacular!



Shades of Tron as the Gauntlet vessel takes on a Light Cycle style mini-boss.

STAGE 3: HUMAN ROAD

This is a graphically superb race over a multi-layer city. It appears that the main cityscape is underneath an enormous transport grid which sits atop it, and it's here that most of the action takes place. Graphical highlights include an enormous, brilliantly animated bird and a couple of Tron lightcycle style mid-level bosses. This is the first level that really makes you think, "wow!". The wow-factor increases still further as you zoom into the skies, shooting through translucent clouds en route to the boss! And as for the boss - well, he's even cooler!







Get a load of this creature. Pretty scary huh? Well, in actuality, he isn't even the boss – just one of many mid-level guardians you need to see off in order to save the day.

BOSS: A3 (ARMAMENT ARMED ARM)

"It died three times and was reborn twice"
Weak Point: Body, Sensor eye, Missile pod
Weapons: Missile pod, three laser vulcans, two spreader bullet tubes, two floating depth charges, continual firing irradiation weapon, six laser cannons, stick-and-harden bullet firing tube.
Notes: Definitely the toughest boss to beat in the first three levels, this guy seems to have a weapon for every occasion! Every time you blast him he re-assembles into a deadlier shape!



The A3 guardian in one of his last configurations. Blast the mother to pieces and move on to the amazing fourth stage!



Another awesome creature to dispose of. As you might have imagined, although this guy's cool, he's still only a mid-level boss!

STAGE 4: GUARDIAN'S GUARDIAN

Stage four (the first level you have to work to get to) is where the graphics start to get scarily impressive. You want stunning misting effects, translucencies and spectacular artwork. Well, just take a look at the screenshots! Dodge between the full 3D rotating debris (really cool) taking out the enemy sprites as they arrive on-screen. Dive into a tunnel and take out the spider-like opponent . At the base are a series of defensive alarms... can you beat 'em all?



The Defense Net, once breached, sends enemy drones to hunt you down.



Dodge between flying debris en route to the mega boss!

BOSS: GUARDIAN'S NIGHT

"For whom is the sword drawn?"
Weak Point: Body
Weapons: Large particle charger cannon, Ray-blade, Laser vulcan cannon, Continual firing irradiation weapon, two cannons
Notes: A continual flight to the right at incredible speeds, Guardian Knight takes the form of a space ship with seemingly impenetrable armour. Dodging in and out of the screen, he's a fearsome opponent...







Guardian's Night has two different flight configurations. Humanoid (top) and space cruiser (bottom). Blast it to pieces!



emerges, sitting on her opponent's face. Certainly one of the more plea



emerges, sitting on her opponent's face. Certainly one of the more plea



STAGE 5: JUDGEMENT SWORD

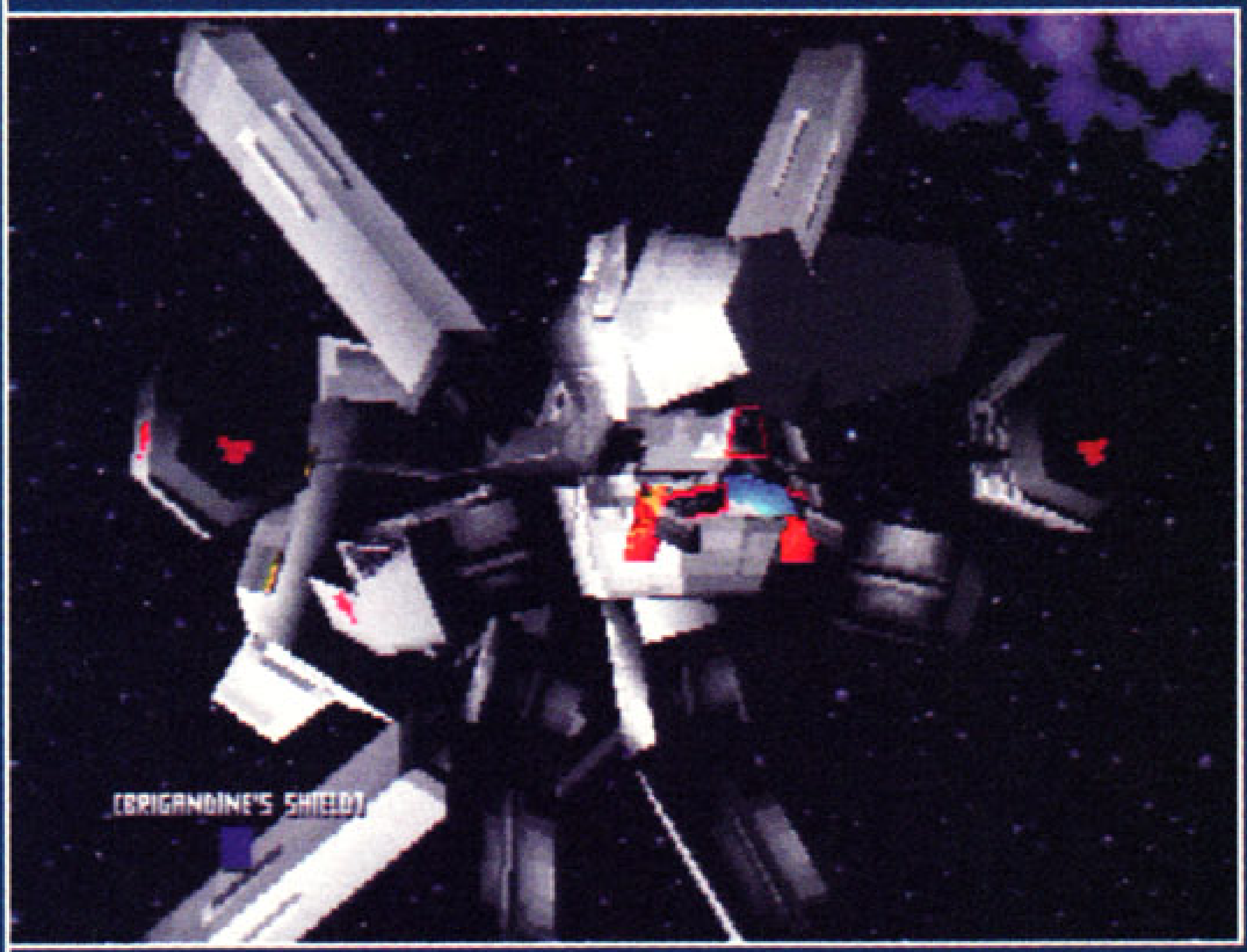
Docking with the mothership, it's time to take the fight to the enemy! Shooting upwards through the atmosphere until the ship is in outer space, it's time to take down the enemy fleet! Here you ship is equipped with two super-weapons along with a shield, allowing to take plenty of damage. Once the shield is down, you're back to your basic ship. The graphical effects here are spectacular... We'll leave stages six and seven to your imagination (although some screenshots are dotted about...) - but rest assured, the awesome graphics continue unabated!



Another of Last Bronx' big hitters, Saburo Zaimoku is a frightening character who wields a giant mallet with devastating effect. His obvious weakness is in his lack Another of Last Brohis lack

BOSS: VASTEEL ORIGINAL

"That was when it all began"
Weak Point: Body, Extra weapons bay
Weapons: Enhanced versions of your weaponry
Notes: It's big, it's nasty and it has enormous guns. That's basically the challenge ahead of you when it comes to facing down the Vasteel Original! Wearing this creature right down to its very spinal column (I shit you not) is the order of the day! Pile on the laser damage and take it DOWN!



Another of Last Bronx' big hitters, Saburo Zaimoku is a frightening character who wields a giant mallet with devastating effect. His obvious weakness

Another of Last Bronx' big hitters, Saburo Zaimoku is a frightening character who wields a giant mallet with devastating effect. His obvious weakness is in his lack





When you see men with big muscles, cute little schoolgirls, happy smiling tanks and huge purple fluffy monsters fighting each other, you've either been eating the wrong variety of mushrooms, or playing the latest obscure and trippy Japanese beat 'em up. Step forward with us into the Waku Waku Seven dimension...

WAKU WAKU 7

BY	SUNSOFT
STYLE	FIGHTING
ORIGIN	ARCADE CONVERSION
RELEASE	OUT NOW (JAPAN)



A great example of the detail (above) as Marurun, complete with his cute little passenger, gives Slash a bit of a seeing to.

THE BIG BLACK THING

The final boss in the game can only be described as a "big black thing" and although his official name is Fernandeath, big black thing is much more descriptive, because... well, just look at the pictures. Perhaps massive, unbelievably huge black thing would be an even better name for him, as thanks to the Saturn's 2D power and the RAM cart, Fernandeath fills most of the screen! He can even be controlled in a two-player battle!





Imagine trying to buy yourself a hat with a head that big...



There's definitely a distinct lack of huge purple fluffy monsters in Saturn fighting games. Ninjas, yes. Feisty female warriors, yes. Butch martial arts experts, yes. Huge purple fluffy monsters? No! Fortunately for us, Sunsoft have also spotted the gap in the huge purple fluffy monster combat market, and released Waku Waku Seven on the Saturn to blatantly cash in. But it's even better than that - they've also included some round black shiny monsters, some gigantic metal monsters and some smooth white cylindrical monsters. Basically, if it's huge and monstrous, it's in Waku Waku Seven!



GIRL-ON-MONSTER ACTION!

Marurun is the name of the big, fat, purple rabbit-like monster in question, and for some strange reason he's got a cute little schoolgirl sitting on his back. She cries when her monster friend loses, and celebrates when he wins - girl and monster in perfect harmony. Actually, this isn't the only example of teamwork in the game - Dandy J is a more traditional macho fighter with his cute girlfriend standing in the background watching him. She sometimes chucks a bomb at you when her man is taking a beating, that's love for you.

There's certainly a big choice of characters in the wonderful world of Waku - Tesse is a tiny little girl with a nice line in violent electro-magnetic assaults, Politank Z is the smiling tank and Rai is the obligatory Ryu-style fighter. Oh and there's also Slash the pointy-eared elf, Arina the token babe, and the weirdest character of the lot - Bonus Kun - a nasty white cylinder who appears as a random bonus opponent when he crash-lands from outer space during the game. Still following all this? Good...



YOU'RE SO VERY SPECIAL

Monsters or not, every beat 'em up needs special moves, and Waku's are rooted firmly in the Capcom style. Experimenting with various fireball and dragon punch button presses uncovers most of the characters specials, and the now essential power meter lets you unleash some visually amazing attacks. There are seven increasing levels of power, which charge up as you fight, and each one gives your fighter some more impressive specials, with some really incredible displays when you're at full charge. You can even activate a 'super' mode, which drains the power meter but also makes your attacks more powerful. And your character glows yellow in super mode, which is always cool.

All of these huge special effects and the great animation appear thanks to the RAM cartridge, and unlike Marvel Super Heroes, Waku doesn't run at all without the cart. For Japanese Saturn owners at least, the RAM cart is becoming an essential item.









Despite wearing horrible square shoes, Politank Z is still cool!









Whoa! The picture above shows how much this game has been influenced by the Capcom fighters. It plays the same as well.

Tesse is a tiny little girl with a nice line in violent electro-magnetic assaults, Politank Z is the smiling tank, and Rai is the obligatory Ryu-style fighter.

WHATEVER MAKES YOU HAPPY

There are a few annoying features in Waku - thanks to the RAM cart support and the totally over-the-top visuals, there's a fair amount of loading, and the game even loads between rounds in the same match. To be fair, it does load in a slightly different background each time, but the loading gets on your nerves. The characters engage in a little 'taunting' before the fight starts as well, meaning yet more loading. And while we're complaining about things, there's a little bit of slow-down sometimes - probably due to the detailed backgrounds, the high resolution, the SNK-style zooming in and out on the action and the huge amount of animation on all the freaky characters, but it's not unbearable, and it doesn't appear too often either, but it's still there.

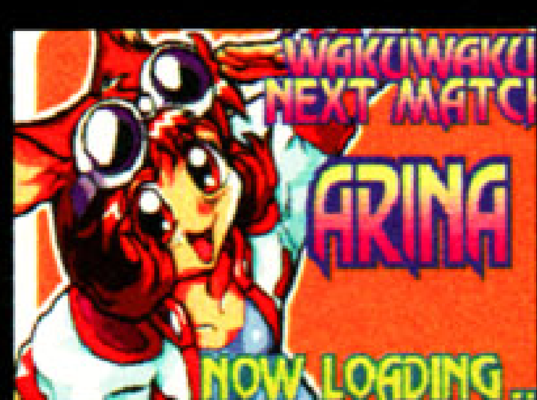
To be honest, there's zero chance of Waku Waku Seven being released over here, due mainly to the fact that it needs the RAM cart, which is a bit of a shame to be honest, as there's a huge legion of 2D fighting fans in the UK that are desperate to experience some quality 2D action. I'm sure you'd all love to play Metal Slug as well, and with Marvel Super Heroes also having an enhanced RAM cart mode, Sega Europe really need to give us some official RAM action!

But is it worth the import hassles for you diehard beat 'em up fans? Well, as long as you look at is as a 'tribute' to the Capcom classics, and don't expect too much in the way of innovation, or maybe if you're looking for an excuse to buy an import RAM cart or use the one you have already, Waku does the business. It's colourful, detailed, very strange and most importantly - it's got huge purple fluffy monsters!



Thanks to the RAM cart, Waku Waku Seven is visually a very cool game. There's loads of character art between rounds, detailed hi-res backgrounds, huge characters and they all animate very nicely indeed. You do notice the odd bit of slowdown, but it's not that intrusive, and it doesn't spoil the game.











Bonus Kun appears at random for a one round fight. He's hard.



Some major impact effects (above), as Arina launches a combo.



Combos are quite easy - ten or eleven hitters are common.

INTERVIEW



THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD

The greatest gun game in the world. That's AM1's incredible House of the Dead. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE's esteemed Japan editor, WARREN HARROD, visited the R&D headquarters of this increasingly prolific developer to talk about the game that's guaranteed to give you nightmares!







AM1's House of the Dead team. Top to bottom: Mr Takashi Oda, Director; Mr Kouji Ooto, Programmer; Mr Hiroyuki Taguchi, Designer and Mr Masakazu Sanbongi, Programmer.

SSM What inspired you to produce a gun game with a horror theme?

AM1 Whilst there are a lot of possibilities in games with a cop theme, such as Virtua Cop or Gunblade New York, we were wondering whether we could develop a different kind of gun game, without a cop theme that included serious images, such as the X-Files or Seven. That's how we started. After that we discussed what kind of enemies to use. We chose to use zombies because we thought they were very real. It's a simple reason but they have a less childish image than ghosts or monsters.

SSM What sort of research did you do when you started this project?

AM1 We didn't do any special research although we did watch a lot of zombie videos. One of the team happens to love zombie movies.

SSM How did you get the idea for the name "The House of the Dead"?

AM1 We've never been asked this question before. It's just a simple translation of the Japanese "SHI NO IE" which means "house of dead." It also implies the place of a person's death. We had various alternate names, but in the end we selected this. Some of the other names we considered were "The Horror Show", "Zombie" and "The Deadly Dead." The ideas for the names that were suggested were the ones where the English words had a cool image. We weren't concerned with what native English speakers thought about them because none of us can speak English.



SSM The House of the Dead has a definite Western horror feel to it. Did you draw your inspiration from any Western horror films in particular and are these kind of horror films popular in Japan?

AM1 Well, we mostly used images of Western horror movies because from the beginning we wanted to make a game that looked like a zombie movie. They're definitely very popular in Japan. The horror genre is well established in Japan. I've heard that horror films in Europe are sort of childish and they're mainly only for younger people. In Japan, the audience for horror films is older than in Europe. Even adults find horror films very exciting.

SSM Who do you feel is the game's target audience?

AM1 We targeted horror fans, gun game fans and adults in their 20s and 30s.

SSM Were you influenced by Capcom's BioHazard?

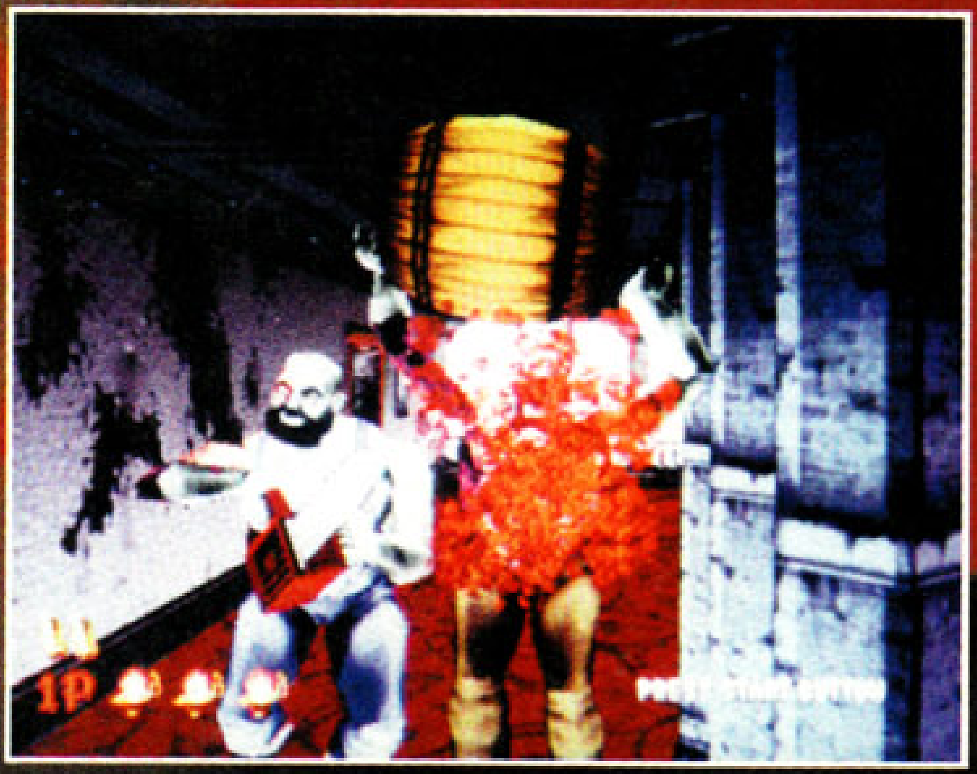
AM1 Yes, absolutely. When we started research for HotD (House of the Dead), BioHazard hadn't yet been released. That was in December 1995. It took us one year and three months. At first BioHazard hadn't yet been released but after we had been developing the game for four of five months it suddenly appeared. We were really stunned.

SSM What did you do to try to do to make The House of the Dead more original than BioHazard?

AM1 What we tried to do to make HotD more original than BioHazard was to try and not care about BioHazard. In other words, at that time we had already decided to use zombies so was impossible to change the theme. We just tried not to be concerned about BioHazard.

SSM Was there anything you wanted to do but couldn't because it had already been done in BioHazard?

AM1 No, there wasn't. This is because BioHazard and HotD





have different styles. For example, in BioHazard, the players shoot a gun once and after that they continue to walk for a while. On the other hand in HotD, the players are shooting almost all the time. HotD has a lot more active features. This is the major difference between them.

SSM Was it your intention to make HotD more of an action orientated horror game compared to BioHazard?
AM1 Yes, it was. We didn't have any choice because we couldn't produce an identical arcade game. We have two images about games, activity and inactivity. BioHazard is a game where you play rather quietly. On the other hand, HotD is an active game where you always keep moving around. We think we've been able to make HotD different from BioHazard in our own way.

SSM The whole game has been designed to look like a movie. Why did you want that kind of feeling in the game?
AM1 There are a lot of childish arcade games aren't there? However, for a long time we had wanted to make a game with a more mature atmosphere for grown-ups. We found that this kind of atmosphere suited HotD very well so we made the game look like a movie in order to emphasise this feeling. In a way, it was a kind of experiment for us, but we think we've succeeded.

SSM The game uses an old movie style, with the scratched film effect. Why did you choose that kind of style?
AM1 When I saw Seven and DNA I was fascinated with the opening sequences. I can't remember what it's called but there's a special term for films with a lot of scratches in them. Anyway, I don't want to say we imitated them but we we just kind of used it as a reference (laugh). It gives those films a darker feeling which I thought would go well with a horror movie so we used that sort of old image.

SSM The game's story is certainly intriguing. Was it your intention from the beginning to create a suitably scary atmosphere for the game?
AM1 From the very beginning we made great efforts to emphasise the scary atmosphere. If you really think it feels scary then all our efforts have paid off. Yes, that was our intention from the very beginning.

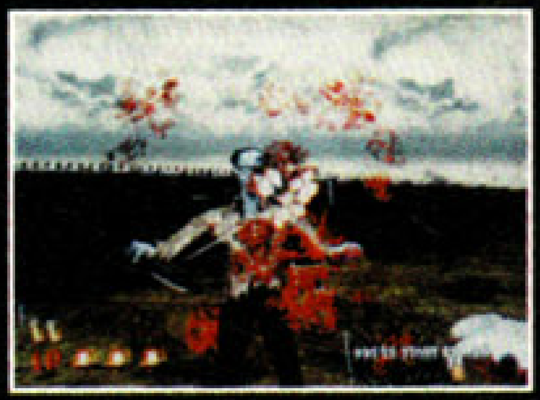
SSM What influence did the story have on the design of the game?
AM1 In the game, one of the characters is the fiancé of Sophie Richards. Mr Oda likes that kind of complicated relationship. We tried to incorporate this kind of image into the game. Sometimes we were forced to change the story because of the design and sometimes we changed the design because of the story. It depended on the situation.

SSM How important is the inclusion of Sophie Richards? What is her real role in the game?
AM1 (Laugh) From the beginning she was an important character in terms of producing the game. Her real role in the game is, well, revenge! She's there to inspire you to take revenge, for her apparent death, during the rest of the game. We'd like you to feel as if she was your real fiance and because of your desire for revenge you'll continue playing the game with the aim of killing Dr Curien, no matter what.

SSM If Sophie is Rowgun's fiance, what is G's aim?
AM1 His aim is to save the scientists. He is very calm and calculated so he's totally absorbed in only doing his duty. If we describe him in modern terms then he isn't an 'analogue person' he's 'digital.' If you take the broader view of the game then those who like emotional men prefer Rowgun while those who like emotionless men prefer G.

SSM No matter what you do, it appears that Sophie is always killed by Chariot. Is there any way to save her?
AM1 As a matter of fact she isn't killed. You see, there are three kinds of endings. In the true ending, Sophie revives and says "Thank you". It only looks like she's been killed, but in fact she's just fainted from the shock. In reality, Sophie is the strongest character. Even if she's repeatedly beaten she doesn't take any damage (laugh).

SSM What are the origins of the mysterious G? Does the "G" have a special meaning?
AM1 We wanted to give this character a mysterious feel to him. >>

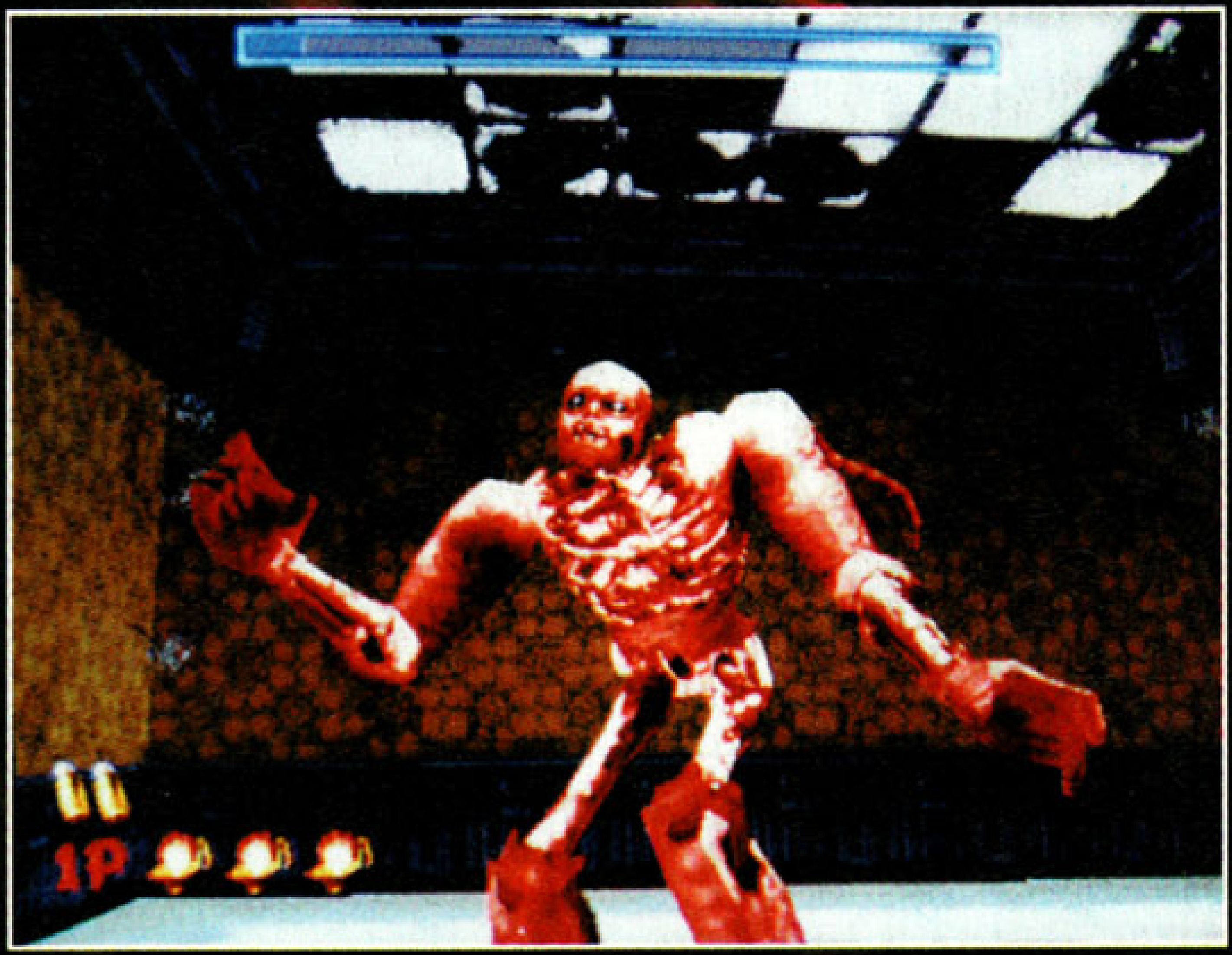




With a chilling storyline, gore-drenched visuals and pistol-pumping two player action, The House of the Dead is truly an arcade classic!







Chariot minus armour. Blast his skinny pink ass back to Hell!





The House of the Dead contains many surprises for unsuspecting players, with zombies appearing out of nowhere to feast on your living flesh!

>> Giving him the name G, which sounds like a code name, makes him more mysterious than if we had given him a name such as John. That's why we decided to call him G. It does have a special meaning but it's a secret. There are still many things about him that nobody yet knows.

SSM What is the ultimate goal of Dr Curian?
AM1 His aim is to conquer the entire world by using all the zombies that he makes.



SSM In the final scene with Dr Curian, the Magician is inside a huge machine called the Bioreactor. Could you explain a little about the Bioreactor please?
AM1 Every person has DNA in their genes. Of course, animals such as dogs and monkeys have DNA as well. The Bioreactor exchanges the DNA sequence in a cell for another and in this way it creates a creature such as a zombie. In fact, all the zombies and monsters in the game have been created by the Bioreactor, however the zombies are actually defects. Chariot, Hangedman and Hermit are perfect but they're just trial creations. Only the final Magician is a perfect creation although even he isn't fully complete.

SSM Could the characters and their mysteries be continued or explained in either a Sega Saturn version or House of the Dead 2 version?
AM1 They could be if we make a HotD2. We haven't yet decided if we'll make a Sega Saturn version, but if we do we would definitely want to clearly solve all the mysteries.

Below: Chariot is an armoured zombie that swings a lethal battle axe. Hit the red chest area to destory its armour!



SSM Is this AM1's first gun game? If not, what other gun games have you produced?
AM1 Our first gun game was Alien 3: The Gun. It was released in 1993 I think. It was a kind of machine gun game similar to the one used in Gunblade.

SSM Did you receive any input from AM2's Virtua Cop development team?
AM1 No, we didn't. Actually, we don't get along with them very well and they never visit us (laugh). It's a joke!

SSM Were you at all influenced by such gun games as the Virtua Cop series or Time Crisis?
AM1 At first we were concerned about them, so we kept studying why these kind of games were so exciting. However, sometime during the development, without realising it, we stopped worrying about them. I think that at that time we surpassed them. Virtua Cop and Time Crisis are completely different from HotD in terms of their game characteristics. While in those games you shoot the enemies from a distance, in HotD the enemies come much closer to you. All in all we weren't really influenced by Virtua Cop or Time Crisis at all.

SSM Because of the success of Virtua Cop were you under a lot of pressure?
AM1 Yes, we were. Because we were following in the footsteps of Virtua Cop 2 we thought that we had to surpass it. We watched a lot of videos of Virtua Cop.

SSM Why did you decide to use the existing Virtua Cop gun and not create a special House of the Dead gun?
AM1 The Virtua Cops guns look a little like toys don't they? As the characters in HotD look like ordinary people we wanted to use more realistic guns but we might be arrested if we made the guns too real (laugh). In Japan it's illegal to use real-looking guns although we don't know if it's illegal or not in Europe.

SSM In what ways do you think that The House of the Dead improves on past light gun games?
AM1 We're really proud of the way that we've been able to create a system where the enemies approach you and come up close. In HotD you can enjoy shooting the enemies as they get closer and closer. On the other hand, in other games you have to kill all the enemies in the far distance. That's what we've been able to improve on.

SSM The addition of multiple routes within The House of the Dead is extremely exciting. Did you include them simply to increase the game's longevity?
AM1 In a way, yes we did but that's just one reason. Another is that we wanted you to find your own most favourable routes. If a junction divides into routes A and B we'd like you to be able to select your own route by yourself.



SSM In what way do the junctions offer the players varying degrees of difficulty?
AM1 If you make a mistake or fail to save a scientist then you are penalised, that's to say, you'll be forced to proceed down a route where there are a lot of enemies. If you save someone you'll be able to go down an easier route. However, frankly speaking, it depends on the person. It's easy to proceed down a route that suits you the best. Everybody has their own easy routes and their own hard routes, don't they? It's a lot of fun trying to find them. I think that this is one of the main attractions for you to play the game repeatedly.

SSM Do the different routes have any other effect on the game? For example, does the game story change?
AM1 We really wanted to put this kind of feature into the game but unfortunately we didn't have enough time so we weren't able to. There aren't any changes in the game story. However, if we made a Sega Saturn version we'd like to add this feature in.

SSM During development, how did your ideas for the junction system change?
AM1 It was our original intention to have the ability to choose your own routes right from the very beginning. However, at first we intended to create a complicated route system, almost like maze. For example, even in just one room there were going to be various routes across it. You'd have been able to go this way or that way. Then gradually the volume of the game became enormous so we had to change it to use simpler routes. For instance, a room now has only two routes across it.

SSM The house maps are very complex. Could you explain how you designed the routes through the house?
AM1 First of all we designed a rough map which showed how to move around the house. For example: 'turn left and you'll see a room.' Then we followed these directions to create all the detail contained within a multi-level environment.

SSM Were you concerned about having to make the routes all the same length and difficulty?
AM1 No, we weren't particularly concerned about the lengths. In the mansion there are various routes of different lengths. In a longer route, the distance between where the zombies appears is greater. Sometimes we made the distance shorter after we created the scenery.

SSM What are the major difficulties of creating a game with so many junctions?
AM1 The greatest problem is trying to handle the vast amount of data needed to create all the different routes. Another difficulty is how to depict the differences in the various situations.

SSM Apart from the game's multiple routes, are there any other incentives for players, who have completed The House of the Dead, to play again?
AM1 When you finish the game you can see how you did on the ranking screen. In HotD there are three endings but you'll only be able to see the true ending if you get the highest ranking. In the normal ending Sophie appears as a zombie, but in the true ending she's alive. If you get more than 62,000 points you'll be able to see it. We'd like everyone to keep playing the game until they can reach the top ranking. Other than that, you'll be able to go to a secret room if you save all the scientists.

SSM In The House of the Dead, each junction divides into two routes. Did you ever consider having three or even four routes coming off one junction?
AM1 Yes, we did consider it but we gave it up because it was too difficult to develop this kind of system. However, if we made a Sega Saturn version the the junction system could become more complex.

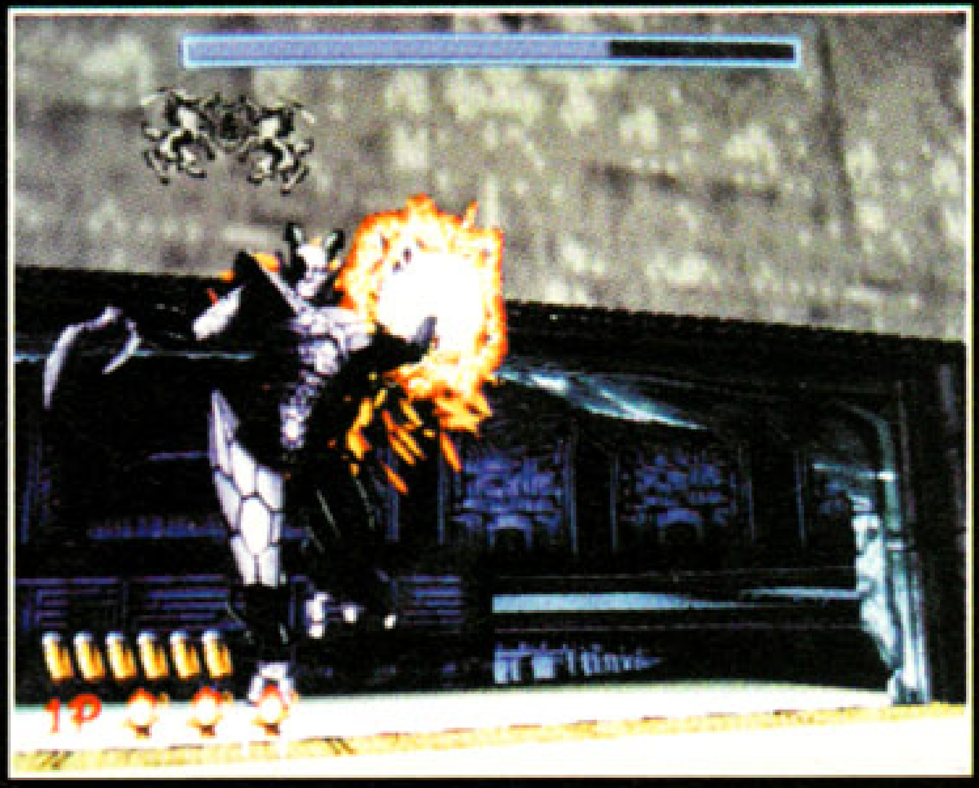


Damn zombie monkey's! Two Saruzou leap into action.



Zombies require multiple hits before disintergrating.





The final challenge. The Magician is Dr Curien's ultimate creation, capable of launching mystical fireballs.

SSM Unlike the "clean" violence in Virtua Cop, The House of the Dead has plenty of body fluids. How do you think the players will react to these gory effects?
AM1 I guess that being frightened is one of the attractions of HotD. Just like a roller coaster, people still enjoy themselves even though they are scared. For example, some people like to play this game because they can do things that in real life they just couldn't do. If Virtua Cop had had such bloody effects, then the visuals would have been extremely gory and it would have caused a problem I think.

SSM Have you had to make any changes for the foreign versions because of the gory horror? In particular, Germany is very strict about this kind of violence isn't it?
AM1 That's right. In order to get around this problem we changed the colour of the blood. You can have green, purple or even blue blood besides the normal red. The game has a special mode where you can choose the colour of the blood. For example, if you select blue then the effects don't look very realistic and so it loses it's gory image. That's why we included this feature.





Save the scientists to gain extra lives and items.

SSM How important is the game's two player feature?
AM1 If you played the game alone you would feel lonely (laugh). Users playing Time Crisis, which is for only one player, look very lonely indeed. We'd like you to enjoy HotD with another person screaming loudly next to you.

SSM Does the game's difficulty alter if there is just a single player?
AM1 No, it doesn't alter that much. It's probably easier to play with somebody else, but it depends. I think that a single player would be only a little more difficult. There isn't a big difference.



SSM What emphasis did you put on the game's scoring system?
AM1 We emphasised that the score becomes higher according to the user's skill. You can get a higher score if you shoot the enemies' heads which is their weak point. You can also get a higher score if you save the scientists.

SSM How does gameplay in House of the Dead differ from Virtua Cop?
AM1 In Virtua Cop you can kill a man with a single shot but in

>>



Type A-1: Sam
Standard human zombie. Work in packs.



Type E-2: Drake
Uses leaping attacks and throwing knives.



Type B-1: Blubon
Moss-covered monster, lives in sewers.



Type C-3: Burner
Attacks enemies using flame thrower.

HotD even if you injure a zombie it'll keep coming closer and closer so you have to shoot it several times. This is one of the game's main features in so much that the scary enemies keep getting nearer. We wanted to focus on the situations where the enemies continue to approach.

SSM Each time you shoot a zombie the part of the zombie you hit is destroyed and the effect is different for each zombie. How difficult was it to create this kind of damage system?
AM1 Simply put, we created the graphical effects for both a normal head and a damaged one. That means it was just twice the work. As for the body, it can be damaged three times so we created the effects of one undamaged body and three or four kinds of damaged body for each zombie. It was a lot of trouble to do.

SSM Did you think that this multi-hit system might be too difficult for players who'd become used to the Virtua Cop one-hit system?
AM1 Actually, we were worried about the reverse. We thought it might become too easy rather than too difficult. In a game where you only have to shoot once to kill a man, the targets are very small. If you miss then you're in trouble. On the other hand, in HotD even if you miss, the targets keep approaching and become bigger and bigger. We were concerned that you might never be killed or that the game might never end.

SSM In House of the Dead there is a lot of detail, such as being able to shoot the fish tank in the bedroom or the human torsos hanging in the kitchen. How important do you think these kind of features are?
AM1 We think that they are very important. In a gun game, it's essential to include features where the game reacts to your shooting because without this kind of visual response it won't appear realistic. It's much more exciting watching how the game reacts.

SSM There are a lot of great zombies in House of the Dead. Where did you get your ideas from?
AM1 Most of the ideas came to us in an instant. For example, when someone said that the monster which appeared in Star Trek the previous day was cool another person would ask him to draw a picture of it. In this way, a zombie that looks like a Star Trek monster was created.

SSM Could you explain the design process for a zombie? Which comes first, the image or the play mechanics?
AM1 Most of the zombies were designed quickly without the need for rough sketches. We just used our imagination. Usually, the image comes first. Sometimes the designers were asked to create a zombie that throws a knife or an axe or something like that. On another occasion they were asked to create a zombie that moved quickly. Either way, we always allow the designers to use their own imagination's in detail.





SSM Apart from the bosses, which zombie was the most challenging one for you to create?
AM1 Technically, Harris was the most difficult to make. Creating those chains took a lot of trouble. In this case the play mechanics came first. We created this zombie to express what we had wanted it to do.

SSM The element of surprise plays a big part in The House of the Dead. Are there any zombies that attack at random or are all of their attack patterns always identical?
AM1 Basically, a zombie's individual attack patterns are always the same but as a group their combined attack patterns change according to each zombie. For example, as a fight develop, depending on whether you kill the zombie swinging a huge metal ball first or last, the pattern of the fight will change. When you fight them please keep their attack patterns in mind. However, you don't have to try to memorise how to play the game, you'll naturally get used it.

SSM Is there any zombie in the game that stands out in your mind as being particularly effective in terms of impact?
AM1 Personally, we're fond of the zombie, Kageo, who looks a little like a dried and shabby mummy. He often appears in the basement. We're sure that he really looks like a mummy.

SSM Were there any zombies you knew you definitely wanted to include when the game was in its initial design stages?
AM1 We definitely wanted to create a zombie carrying a chainsaw and some fat zombies as well.

SSM How did these zombies evolve during development?
AM1 None of the monsters we designed in the first half of development have remained in the final version. We kept improving their designs as the development progressed so we no longer have their original designs.

SSM Were there any zombies that were designed but dropped because you didn't have enough time or weren't suitable?
AM1 Yes, there were a lot. You know, there are some kinds of targets that you just aren't supposed to shoot at aren't there? For example, children, women and elderly people. At one point, we designed a zombie that looked like an elderly woman.



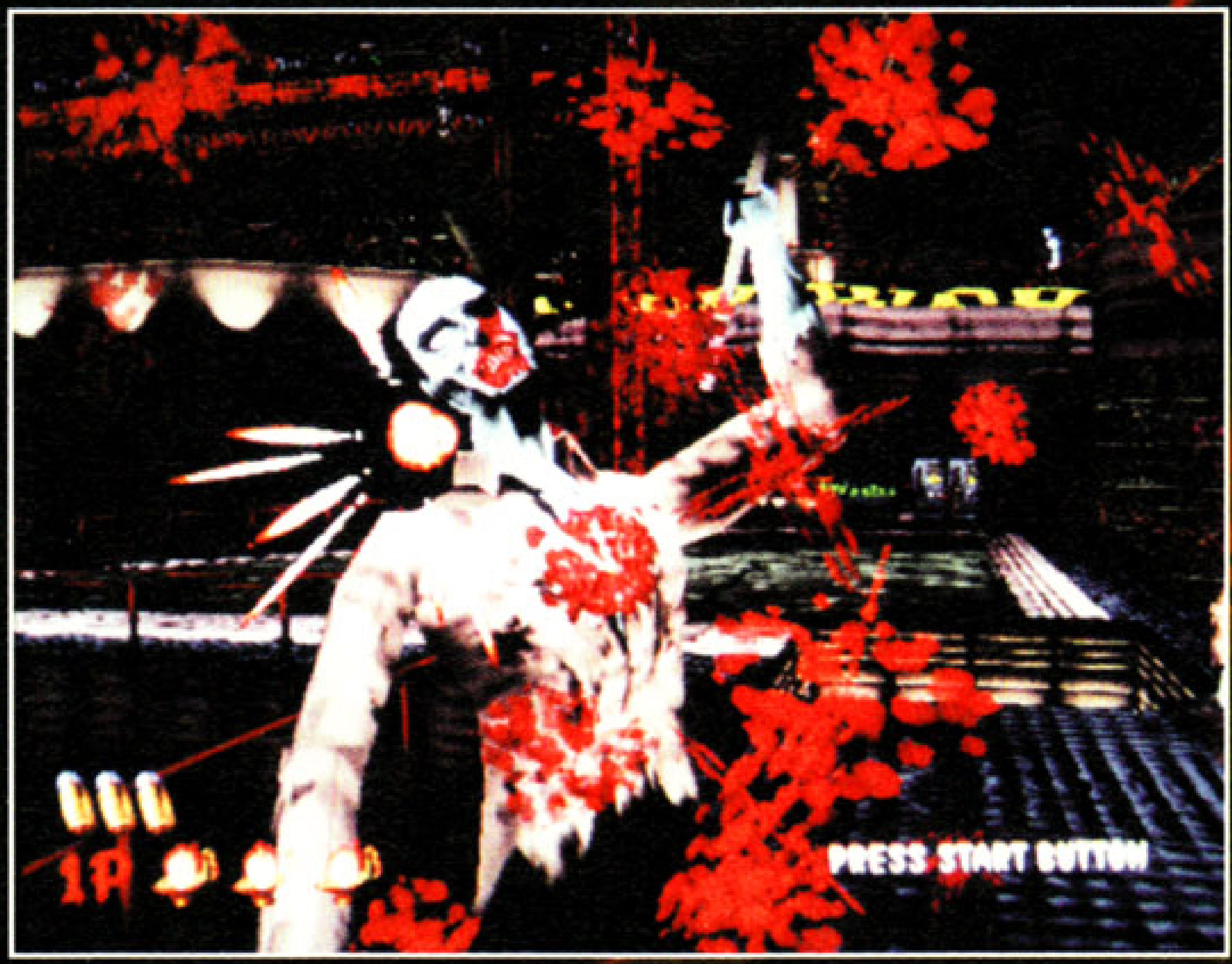




Stage 1 boss Chariot takes a pounding from agents Tom Rowgun and G!



Blast barrel hurling zombies in the mansion's inner levels.



Even though she was a zombie she still had a lot of wrinkles so she didn't look like anything other than an elderly woman. Of course, we had intended to design her as a zombie but we were worried that people might play the game and say "Hey! it's an elderly woman!" So we dropped it.

SSM All the zombie's movements are very smooth. Did you use any kind of motion capture?
AM1 Yes we did, but only for reference. We used it to design the basic movements. For the details, such as how to design the zombie's smooth movements, we didn't use motion capture. Instead, the designers suggested how we should alter the zombie's movements to make them smoother and we followed their advice.

SSM How about Chariot? Its movement are very smooth isn't it?
AM1 This is the one monster that does use the full motion capture movement. We were able to find a man who moves just like Chariot and we persuaded him to do the motion capture for us. As Chariot is the first boss we wanted to really impress the players with his movements. You'll be surprised when you see him move. When he did the motion capture, he didn't use a real battle axe, he was just holding a broom.

SSM Did you feel it was necessary to tell the player the boss character's weak points?
AM1 Yes, we did. Some of the players can discover the bosses' weak points but there are also those who can't. When the latter play the game, they'll soon be killed and they won't be satisfied with that. We felt sorry for those people. That's the reason why we show the boss character's weak points in advance.

SSM What efforts did you take in order to make the final boss even more exciting than the other monsters?
AM1 We tried to make his image stronger than the other enemies. We allowed him to fly and we also made him clever. For a boss character, he's very handsome which is completely different from the normal zombies.

SSM What was the player reaction at your first location test?
AM1 It went well. We got the feedback that we needed to ensure that we could keep developing the game as we were. There were a lot of people waiting in line for their turn to play the game. As soon as we put the game in position, everybody rushed over to it. It was amazing. When we saw their reaction, we had a certain expectation that we should keep going as opposed to simply one where we could keep going. It didn't take very long before they were asking us to develop a Sega Saturn version (laugh). Everyone was surprised that HotD was from Sega because it doesn't look like a typical Sega game.

SSM How much contact did you have with AM4 in designing the game's scary cabinet?
AM1 We gave AM4 some screen pictures of the game and we left the design the of the cabinet to them. We designed all the cabinet illustrations, including the house and zombie, and then AM4 combined them with their cabinet to produce the final machine. The design of the cabinet was done about one month before our first location test. We think they did a good job of designing the cabinet.

SSM Could you tell us a little about The House of the Dead's atmospheric soundtrack?
AM1 We asked the sound team to create music that was most suited to each stage. At first the music has an action theme but it becomes more scary as the levels progress. The soundtrack is really fabulous so we'd be really happy if it was released, but we don't have any plans at the moment. We might it give it away free with the Sega Saturn version if we did one. We could record it on the CD's blank space so that the players could enjoy listening to it at any time.

SSM How did you create all the special sound effects in House of the Dead? Were any sound effects sampled from real sources?
AM1 Most of the sound effects are human voices which we sampled by recording the groans of three people in a small room. Besides the voices there are a few other sound effects that we sampled from real sources as well. For example, the shattering of glass. We eagerly requested them to record lots of sound effects for us. If we released a sound track CD it could be full of groans as well (laugh).

SSM Were there any ideas or features you were unable to use in the game that could appear in a potential sequel?
AM1 Yes, there were. If we did make a sequel then we'd like to do as many of the things as possible that we couldn't do the first time. We'd still like to use the same main characters if possible, but we'd like to change the atmosphere slightly. The story would still be related to the original game as we'd like the plot to continue in the same way as it does in the X-Files. However, we don't yet know if we'll do a sequel yet. First of all we'd like to take a break for a while.

SSM The House of the Dead has been very successful at the arcade. Which element has been the biggest factor in it's success?
AM1 It's simplicity. I mean, all you have to do is put in one coin and you can enjoy shooting as much as you like. It's also the horror image as well, it's been targeted for adults who have a desire to see scary things. Overall, playing HotD has a great feeling. You can shoot away "Bang! Bang! Bang!" and watch the game react.

SSM Which feature of House of the Dead are you personally most proud of?
AM1 We did it all using the Model 2!

SSM Finally, do you have a message for your fans in the UK?
AM1 It's difficult for us to imagine how everyone on the other side of the world is enjoying HotD because we've never been to Europe, but we are very happy that everyone over there is also enjoying The House of the Dead.

Now turn to page 10 for your chance to win an EXCLUSIVE House of the Dead t-shirt from those fantastic folk at AM3!k



Type A-2: Neil
Improved version of Sam. Fairly violent.



Type D-2: Gilmore
Attacks victims using giant sledge hammer.


Type C-1: Samson
Wields lethal chainsaw and can even deflect bullets.



Type D-3: Harris
Swings deadly ball and chain from a distance.

Rumble in the







Astonishingly, just scant weeks on from our last look at the incredible Saturn version of Last Bronx, a near complete version of AM3's incredible beat 'em up has descended upon us like a gift from the gods. So, whilst we eagerly await a reviewable PAL translation of this highly anticipated title, LEE NUTTER takes an in-depth look at the latest advances made by AM3.





The complex underground levels with ceilings are now in place and looking awesome!

From our exclusive in-depth look at AM3's incredible Saturn conversion of their acclaimed Last Bronx just a few weeks ago, it was apparent to all that it was going to be something very special indeed. However, in the remarkably short space of time which has elapsed since, the project has come on leaps and bounds. Last Bronx is rapidly nearing the end of its development cycle, with the AM3 conversion team pulling out all the stops to make sure Last Bronx is the top-notch conversion Saturn owners are longing for. At present, virtually all of the solo and multi-player options are complete, along with some truly amazing gameplay variations and some awesome graphical frippery not seen before in a Saturn beat 'em up. The Saturn version has managed to retain all the incredible speed and fluidity of the coin-op original, running at a rock-solid 60 frames per second and in the Saturn's high-resolution mode. As if all this wasn't enough to get your juices flowing, the PAL conversion of this most sought after game will feature ALL of the brutal martial arts weapons from the coin-op original, including the controversial nunchukas! The wait is almost over... >>

Bronx










Tommy's range of pole-based attacks may look spectacular, with huge spiralling motion-blur effects abound, but their effectiveness is rather limited. As such, Tommy is possibly one of the weaker fighters in Last Bronx. Pictured above is one of Tommy's more useful throws, using his pole to rotate his opponent around before landing a particularly vicious head-stamp. Readers with a keen eye may also be able to spot Lisa's knickers, a regular feature in Last Bronx.

Right: We weren't sure if the processor-intensive ceilings were going to make it through to the Saturn version of Last Bronx. But take a glance at the awesome shots around this page and it becomes apparent that the underground levels are in and looking truly spectacular.






>> EXCLUSIVE: PICTURES OF UNDERGROUND STAGES!

As we revealed in last month's issue, one of the few compromises made by AM3 in converting the awesome Last Bronx to the Saturn regards the backgrounds. The huge 3D buildings modelled on real Tokyo architecture which featured in the arcade version were clearly going to be difficult to replicate on the Saturn. Of the few backgrounds which had been programmed into the 60% version we featured last month, gone were the 3D buildings and in their place were several layers of parallax scrolling to create a very convincing 3D illusion. Though they looked nothing short of breathtaking and far, far superior to those of VF2 and Fighters MegaMix, the most graphically accomplished levels were yet to be programmed in. In the coin-op original, the Lust Subway and Radical Parking Lot stages featured some incredible 3D gimmickry, with the fights taking place in a claustrophobic underground area complete with ceilings.

Now, considering the compromises made on the simpler levels, we had our doubts as to whether the processor intensive ceilings would make it through to the Saturn version of Last Bronx. But feast your eyes on the accompanying screen shots and it becomes apparent that the AM3 conversion team have performed miracles in bringing the Lust Subway and Radical Parking Lot to the Saturn intact and complete with ceilings. Each of these levels look absolutely stunning, with the texture-mapped ceilings being impressive to the point of distracting players from the fight at hand. They're that good.




NUNCHUKAS ARE IN!

That's right, in a bizarre twist of events which emerged this week, it would appear that the BBFC (British Board of Film Classification) has given Sega of Europe the go-ahead to leave the nunchukas in the PAL version of Last Bronx. Previously, it was thought that the lethal nunchukas would only appear in the NTSC versions of the game, given that the controversial weapon and images thereof are banned in this country. Or at least, so we thought. However, it seems as though Sega have been able to convince the BBFC that Last Bronx is only a game after all, and as such the nunchukas have been granted a stay of execution. This is particularly odd, considering when faced with a similar problem, Namco removed the offending weapon from the PAL version of Soul Blade and replaced it with a three-sectioned staff. Now I'm just speculating here, but maybe the BBFC considered Saturn owners less likely to be affected by images



The spectacular collision effects perfectly mimic those of the arcade version of Last Bronx. They're also accompanied by some satisfyingly meaty sound effects.



In a Jeffrey-style manoeuvre, the mighty warrior Zaimoku picks Nagi up by her face and violently throws her defenceless body to the ground.

Below: Though initially one of the more difficult characters to master, the brutal Kurosawa is one of the best fighters in the game. His impressive range of throws prove deadly to opponents on the receiving end, but are quite difficult for players to get to grips with. Oh, and they look really cool too.







of the aforementioned weapon than gullible and impressionable PlayStation-owning saps. Who knows? In fact... who cares?

WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

The problem now facing Saturn owners is whether Last Bronx differentiates itself sufficiently from the superlative Sega beat 'em ups already available to warrant purchase. Well, the resounding answer from the SSM office is "yes". In terms of graphics, Last Bronx exhibits some incredible hi-res visuals, astonishing pseudo-3D backgrounds and all manner of technical trickery never before seen on the Saturn, giving Last Bronx a definite edge over VF2.

However, the real differences lie in the gameplay. Whilst comparisons may be drawn with Fighting Vipers given the urban setting and use of weapons, Last Bronx is essentially quite different. Whereas FV only touched on the use of weapons, Last Bronx exploits it to the full, with all eight fighters using an item of weaponry which their range of manoeuvres are based around. This allows for some devastating weapon-based attacks and bone-crunching manoeuvres, making Last Bronx a more violent and tear-inducing beat 'em up than any other you may care to mention.

Whilst the familiar punch, guard and kick control method has been retained, by and large the combo system in Last Bronx is quite different from the usual Sega beat 'em up. A strong Street Fighter influence appears to have taken hold of the AM3 team, with fireball and dragon punch manoeuvres resulting in some spectacular throws. However, clearly not trying to alienate the legions of VF gamers, the standard PPPK combos are also in evidence throughout, though the punch has largely been replaced by a weapon attack.

A similar ring system has been implemented with Last Bronx, though ring-outs are largely redundant as the ring is enclosed by 3D barriers, in similar fashion to Fighting Vipers. Unlike FV however, the barriers cannot be destroyed or overcome, but players are able to scale them in order to get some "mad height" before launching an aerial attack on unsuspecting opponents from the vantage point.

Upon its release, Last Bronx will possibly have more immediate appeal for many gamers, considering the instantly gratifying range of ultra-violent moves which don't require a deep knowledge

COMEDY WEAPONS!

Those familiar with the arcade version of Last Bronx may be aware of the superb comedy weapons cheat. Well, the good news is that AM3 have already programmed this bizarre cheat into the Saturn version of the game. By inputting a simple combination into the character select screen, the weapon of the chosen fighter is transformed into a household implement. Zaimoku for example, has his mallet turned into a giant fish, whilst Kurosawa has his wooden sword turned into a giant fan, Nagi has her sais turned into a spoon and fork and Tommy has his pole turned into a broom! Pretty bizarre, but that's the Japanese for you.













Better than the mighty VF2? Well, Last Bronx is certainly visually superior, but maybe lacks the same depth of gameplay enjoyed by AM2's classic.

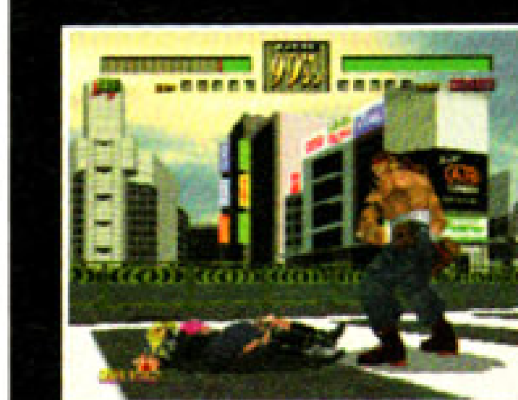






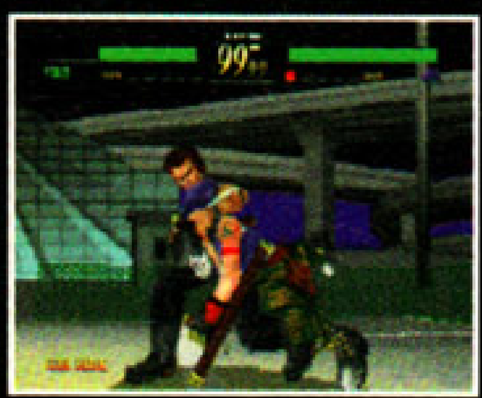






Zaimoku is one of Last Bronx's heavy hitters, compromising the speed and agility enjoyed by other fighters, for unrivalled power and awesome strength. His character can be likened to that of VF's Jeffrey, with the two muscle-bound giants having several manoeuvres in common. The devastating throw pictured above, for example, is remarkably similar to Jeffrey's Crucifix piledriver throw, sapping the defenceless Nagi's energy bar.

SHOWCASE





We're as surprised as anyone that Joe's nunchukas are remaining in the PAL version of Last Bronx, though, if the truth be known, it wouldn't have made that much difference if they were removed. Still, it means that the awesome Saturn conversion is even closer to the arcade original. As you can see from the sequence above, Joe's nunchuka attacks make him a formidable opponent, forcing Yoko to the ground before letting her feel the full force of his weapon.







Left: Though Tommy has an impressive range of pole-based attacks, he's generally considered one of the weaker fighters in Last Bronx.

of the characters. However, a deeper and more realistic challenge is offered in the still incredible Virtua Fighter 2, whilst the recent Fighters MegaMix offers unparalleled lastability given the huge range of characters.

CLOSEST ARCADE CONVERSION YET?

Well, certainly the ultra-violent gameplay is identical to the original coin-op version, but clearly there would be compromises with the graphics. However, after playing the very latest version of the game to emerge from Sega of Japan, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE came away extremely impressed with what we saw and confident of a top notch conversion.

From a technical standpoint, AM3 have the Saturn working harder than ever before to recreate the look of the coin-op. We've already touched on the incredible backgrounds, but to reiterate the point, the 2D parallax scrolling does a fantastic job of recreating the 3D Tokyo architecture featured in the coin-op, surpassing those of any Saturn beat 'em up to date. Although often obscured by the 3D barriers enclosing the ring, the buildings look incredibly solid and shift about at an incredible rate as the rotating camera pans around the fighters.

The fighters themselves are equally as impressive, with each portrayed in the Saturn's high-resolution mode, giving them a much cleaner overall appearance than the low-res characters of Fighters MegaMix. Of course, this would be as a trade-off with light-sourcing, though oddly, not even the Last Bronx coin-op featured light-sourced characters. The amount of detail exhibited by each of the characters is frankly stunning, at least on par with those of VF2 and making each virtually indistinguishable from their coin-op counterparts.



Whilst the fighter's shadows fail to accurately replicate those of the arcade version of Last Bronx, they are nonetheless effective.

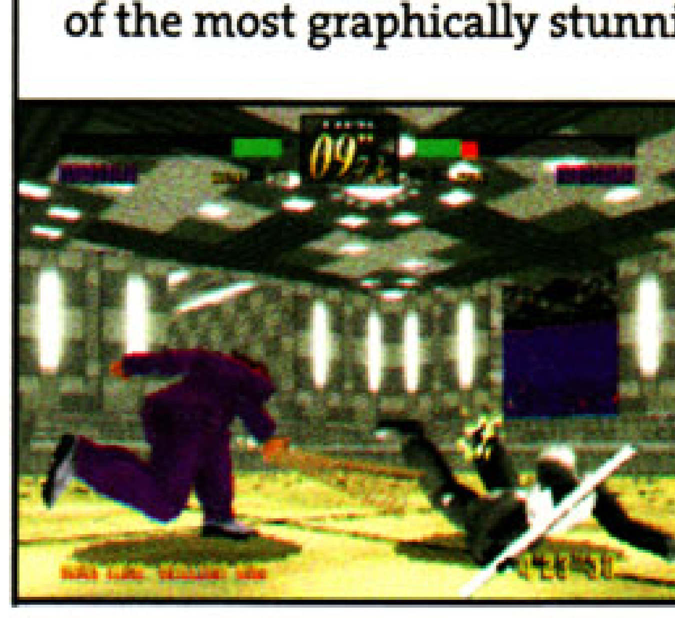
Virtually all of the stunning effects appear to have made it through to the amazing Saturn conversion. As you can see from the shots on this page, the collision effects look spectacular, perfectly imitating those of the arcade version. Even more impressive are the weapon-trace effects, which leave a blur behind the super-fast weapon-based attacks. On the down side, the impact craters of downed fighters which made an appearance in the Saturn version of Fighting Vipers are conspicuously absent. But considering such effects caused slowdown in the Saturn version of Fighting Vipers, they're best left out.

Slightly disappointing are the shadows which AM3 have programmed into the most recent version of the game. Gone are the processor intensive shadows mimicking the exact movements of each fighter, and in place are the less impressive circular shadows which keep their form throughout the fight. It's a bit of a shame, as this is one of the very few aspects which differentiates the Saturn version from that of the arcade, but are adequate nevertheless.

Overall, it would appear that the AM3 conversion team have done a fantastic job in converting their arcade beat 'em up to the

HIDDEN STAGE AND BOSSES!

Awaiting successful players at the end of Last Bronx is the boss character from the arcade version of the game. Little is known about this strange character other than his name, Red Eye. The goggle-wearing combatant follows in the Sega beat 'em up tradition of deriving his moves from various other fighters featured in the game, though his use of ton-fah weaponry to pummel his opponents to death is similar to that of Yoko. Once beaten, players proceed to face a metallic version of their chosen character at the incredible Brilliant Room, a secret level which stands out as being one of the most graphically stunning in the entire game.









As opposed to having a rendered intro preceding the game, as is often the case, the AM3 conversion team have opted for a Anime-style intro for the Saturn version of Last Bronx. This mini-movie shows each of the eight combatants coming together in a battle for supremacy in downtown Tokyo.





Saturn. The compromises appear to be minimal, and necessary to keep the speed running at a solid 60 frames per second. Closest arcade conversion yet? Possibly, all will be revealed next month.

ALL-NEW SATURN FEATURES

Sega coin-op conversions are renowned for their wealth of options and Saturn-specific modes, with Last Bronx being no exception. Aside from the self-explanatory Arcade and Versus modes, AM3 have managed to cram in a shed-load of extra gameplay variations not present in the arcade original.

The familiar Survival Mode which appeared in Fighters MegaMix has made it through to the Saturn version of Last Bronx. Players face the arduous task of playing through the entire roster of characters featured in the game with only a single energy bar, with the aim being simply to survive. Players are then ranked according to the time taken and the number of opponents they have beaten.

AM3 have also added a Time Attack mode to Last Bronx, whereby players proceed through the entire game as quickly as possible in order to rack up the fastest time. The idea being to return back to the game to beat your previous best time. Somewhat more bizarre is the all-new Story Mode, though in the Japanese version of the game we've received, it's not clear as to exactly what the hell is going on. What is apparent, is that some sort of conversation takes place between the protagonists, possibly unveiling some of the complex plot before proceeding to beat the crap out of one another. In addition, a watch mode is now in place, which allows players the opportunity to view a non-interactive battle between any two of the characters through each of the different stages in the game.



One of Lisa's more impressive throws has her opponent launched high into the air.




FIRST BRONX REVIEW

We've had a few days now to savour the brilliance of Last Bronx, which in its current form is nigh-on complete. So if everything goes to plan, expect the exclusive review of this year's most anticipated beat 'em up in the very next issue of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE. Be sure not to miss it.



At the end of the game, successful players face a metallic version of their character in the Brilliant Room, which for want of a better word is, er... brilliant.








Kurosawa can be likened to VF's Akira, in that both are difficult to master, but, in the right hands, are lethal fighters. Kurosawa's devastating range of sword-based attacks and throws are amongst the most spectacular and bone-crunchingly violent in the game. Pictured above is one of his more complex throws, swinging his opponent around through 180 degrees before striking him full-on in the face with his wooden sword, sending his victim flying helplessly through the air.

ON THE CD

Now then, a demo CD with one incredibly cool game like Sonic Jam would be amazing, and more than enough to warrant having the disc on the cover. However, here at SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE we like to look after our readers, so how would you feel if we threw in a playable version of Sega Rally as well? And Sonic 3D. And Die Hard Arcade. And then, to completely humiliate the competition, we'll give you some tasty video clips of all the forthcoming Saturn sensations - Last Bronx, Duke Nukem, Sega Touring Car, WipEout 2097 and loads of others!

SONIC JAM - PLAYABLE!

This is the headline act on the CD, the main attraction, the star turn and undisputed champ of retro-gaming... Sonic Jam! We still can't believe how good Sonic looks in this incredible 3D world, and now you can share our disbelief thanks to this cool demo. Not only do you get to play the stunning Sonic World 3D area, well before the game gets a proper UK release, but there are also two levels from the original Megadrive Sonic the Hedgehog, and a further two levels from the ground-breaking sequel - Sonic 2. If that's not impressive enough, both of these classic games also feature their respective bonus levels as well, so there's absolutely loads to discover!

But it's Sonic World you want to play, right? Of course it is! If you read last month's review, you'll know how gorgeous this 3D museum world looks - now you get to play it! Sega obviously aren't going to give away the entire game, so they've cleverly put a time limit of one minute onto Sonic World, which gives you 60 seconds to explore this amazing 3D world, and see exactly why this game is being heralded as one of the best Saturn games so far. The rest of the cool features, like the challenges and time attack modes, and the buildings that house the sound test, the art gallery, and the movie theatre, can't be accessed in this demo, but hey, surely the chance to play Sonic World is enough to keep you happy?















SEGA RALLY - THE BEST!

It's well over 18 months since this milestone in Saturn gaming was launched, and Sega Rally is still the best driving game on any console. That's a fact. Every other Saturn and PlayStation racer that's tried (and failed) to better Sega's premiere driving game, has been left on the starting grid. So Saturn owners sleep safe in the knowledge that they have the best racing game ever. Thanks to the new £99 Saturn deal, we thought it would be handy for 'new recruits' to get a taste of Sega Rally in action, hence the inclusion of the entire Forest course this CD. This driving demo should also get players geared up for Touring Car!

SONIC 3D - MORE SONIC!

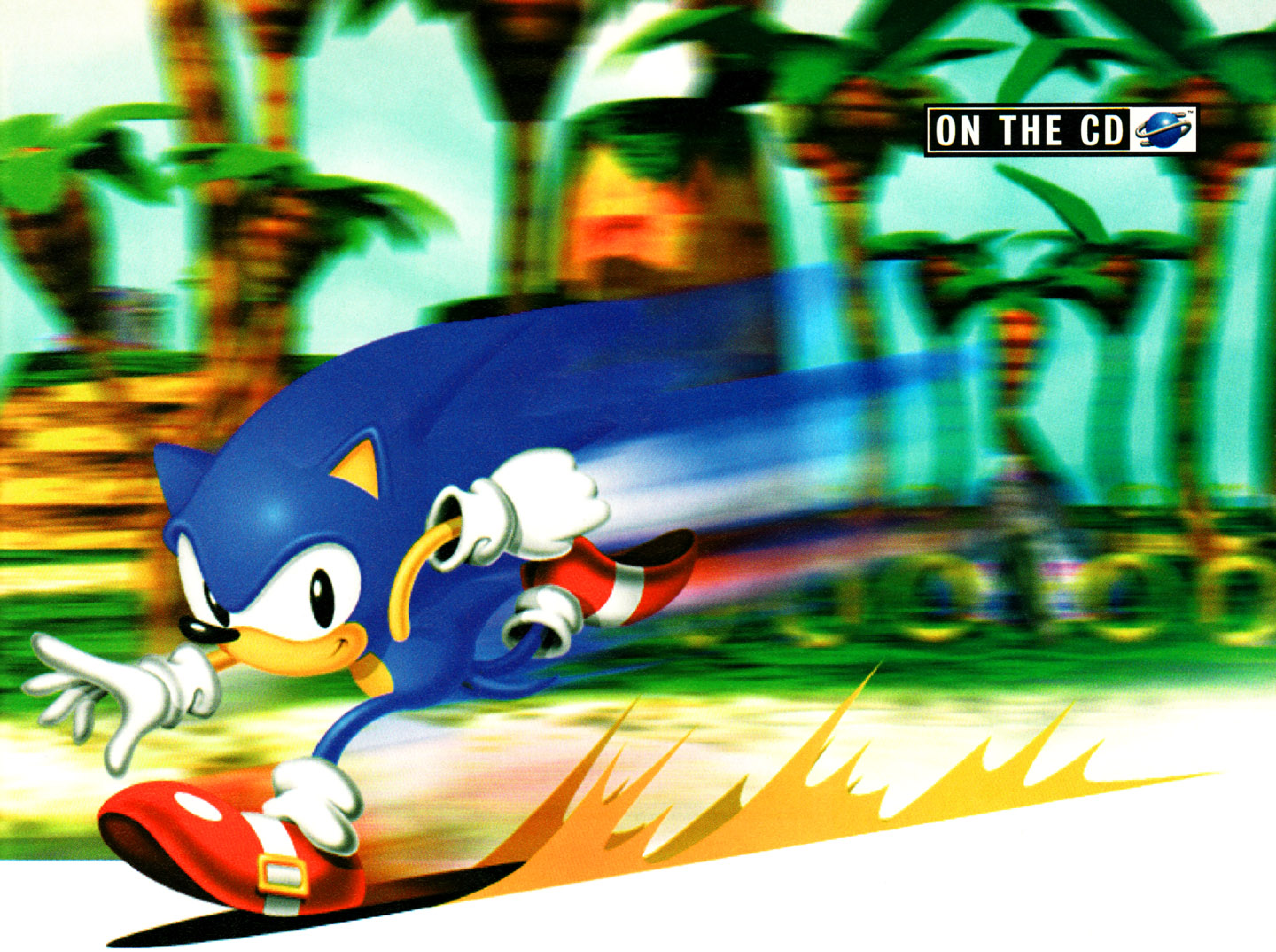
It's time for even more Sonic action! This time he's collecting rings and Flickies (the cute, fluffy animals that appear when you destroy a bad guy) in the cool isometric Sonic 3D. Look out for the stunning 3D bonus level coded by Sonic Team themselves, and it's interesting to compare it with the bonus section from Sonic 2 (part of the Sonic Jam demo), as they're both very similar in style! Obviously this version looks way better as it was coded specifically for the Saturn, and it's a great demo of the Saturn's hi-res mode. Developer Travellers Tales are now busy programming Sonic R.











DIE HARD ARCADE AS WELL!

Phew! It's a good job there's loads of room on these Compact Discs, otherwise we wouldn't be able to bring you Die Hard Arcade. Yeah we know it was on the last disc we gave you, but there may be some fools who have yet to purchase that issue, and there are also those new Saturn owners to take care of. Another cool game for nothing!





FULL-ON FULL MOTION!

Warning, warning! Brain overload imminent! Just when you thought we couldn't possibly cram anything else onto this month's CD, you'll notice the video clips! Although the quality of the video isn't amazingly high, you still get to see Last Bronx, Resident Evil, Dragon Force, Enenmy Zero, WipEout 2097, Duke Nukem and Sega Touring Car! All Saturn versions, all very good, and all exclusively on our cover CD!

Enjoy yourselves, we need to go and have a lie down!





Although the Last Bronx and Resident Evil demos aren't playable this month, they may just appear on a future CD...



Make sure you check out the cool FMV demos also included on the disc. Sega's future Saturn line-up never looked so good!

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY... ALMOST!

Here's a little quiz for all you intelligent readers out there. Is the Saturn (a) a games machine, or (b) a video recorder? The correct answer is, of course, that the Saturn is a games machine, and even though it can play fairly decent Full Motion Video, the lower frame rate just doesn't do the games justice. Last Bronx is a good example - the video clip shows the essence of the gameplay and a decent number of the moves, but the resolution and gorgeous 60fps graphics suffer quite a bit in the video playback process. Basically, believe the warning that appears on screen - these games look even better when you see them for real!

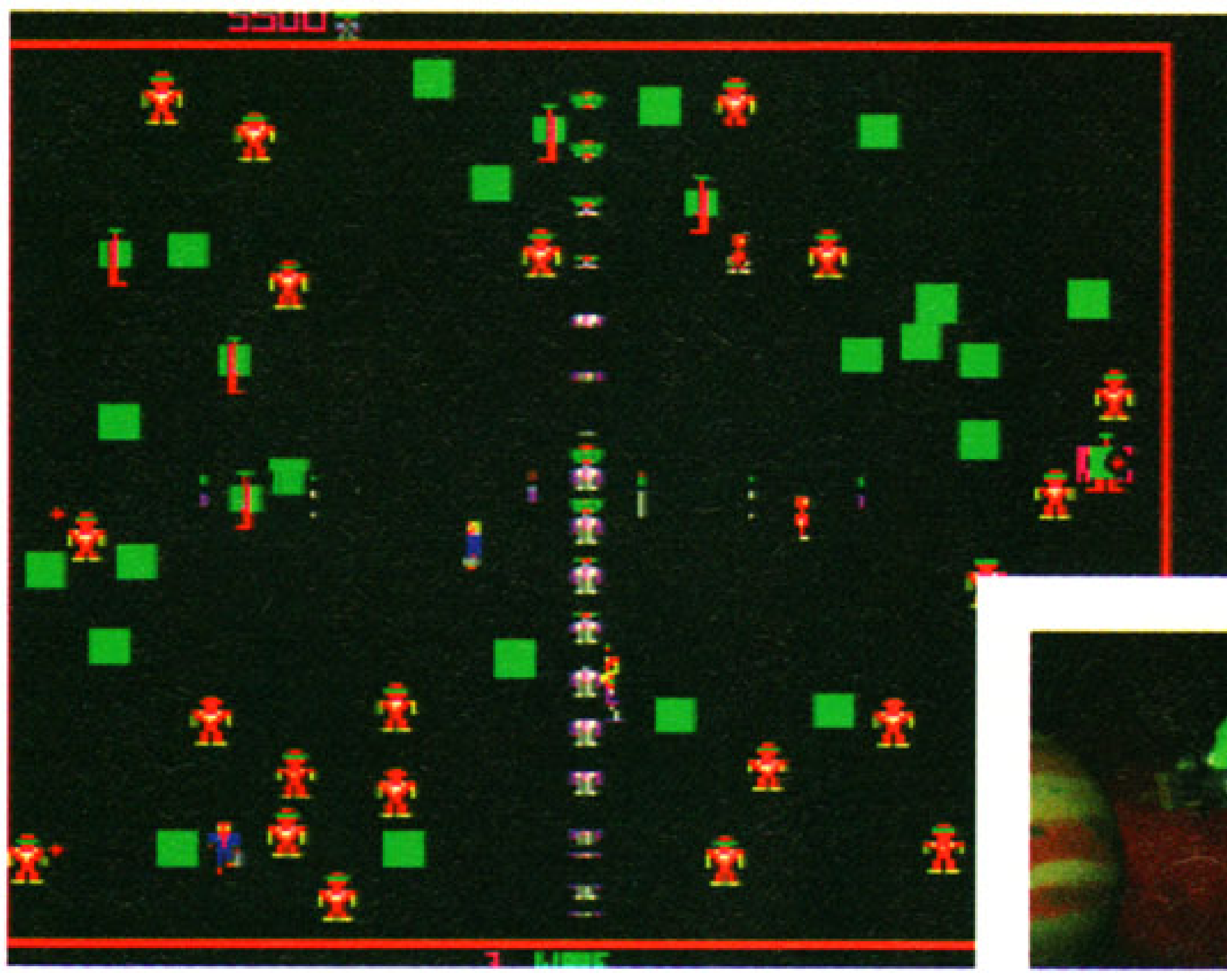


Don't panic when you see the Japanese text. A few of these demos are so exclusive they've not even been translated yet.

WILLIAMS ARCADE GREATEST

It's a retro-wonderland in the Saturn marketplace. Last month we thrilled to Sonic Jam. This time we go back... back... to the mid-eighties and true coin-op mastery!

BY	WILLIAMS/GT
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	RETRO
RELEASE	SEPTEMBER





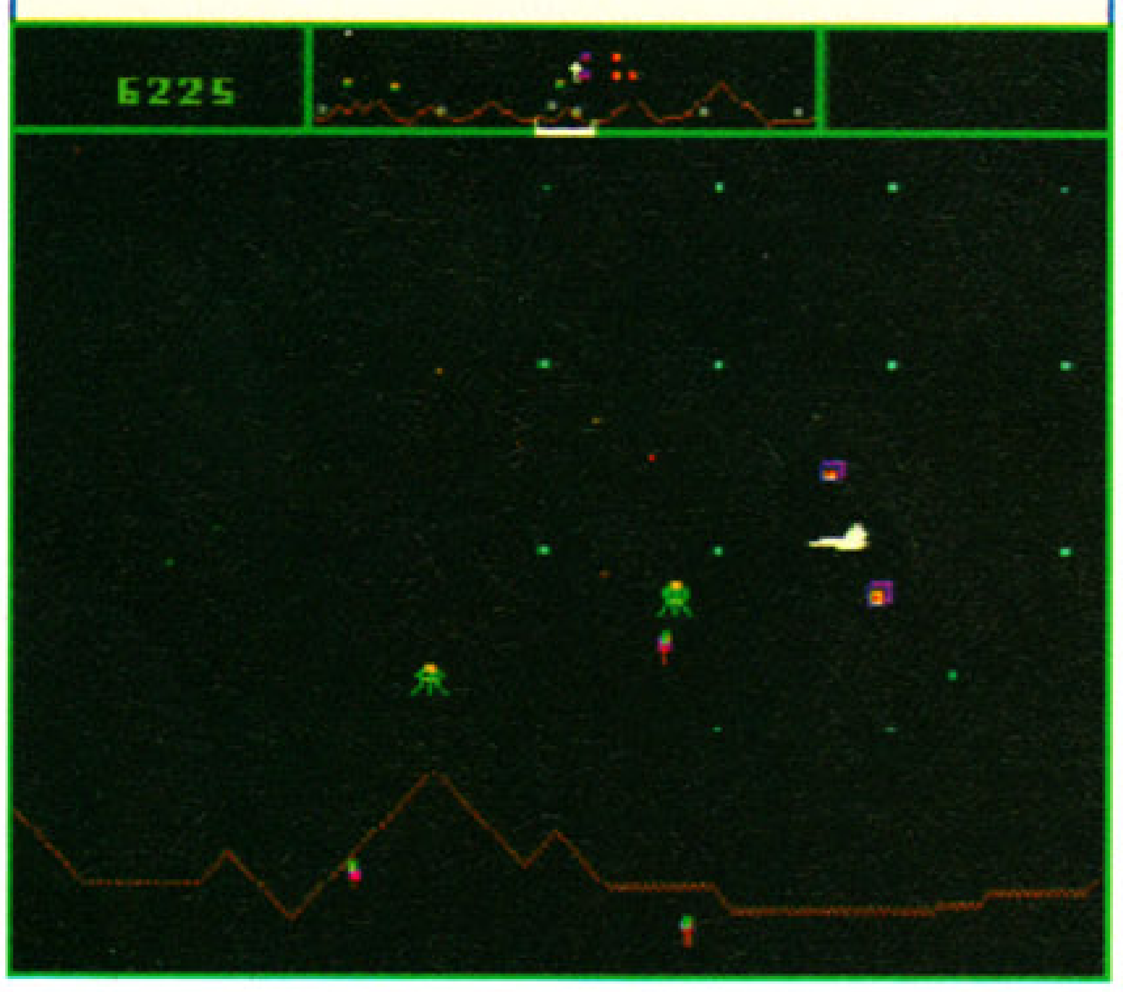
Bubbles: obscure but rather jolly overall.





DEFENDER

The centrepiece of the pack has to be the pixel perfect rendition of Defender. An awesome title - even by today's standards - Defender has you patrolling a horizontally scrolling landscape, protecting the humans below from the myriad aliens above. Simple, yet vastly challenging. A true test of videogames mastery.



The Saturn seems to be a hotbed of retro activity at the moment - this issue we also take a look at the Salamander Deluxe Pack - an effort, just like this one, to bring the greatest moments of coin-operated machinery to the Sega machine. Having been in the industry for a long time now, and having been brought up on games like the ones in Williams Arcade Greatest Hits, I have to admit that I just can't get enough of packs like this.

The mid-eighties, when Williams were at their height, was a wonderful time for arcade games. Graphics were progressing beyond the simple bitmaps into recognisable shapes, but the emphasis was still firmly on new concepts and new styles of gameplay.

That's what so cool about this pack - the originality of these games still shines through even though we're looking at 15-year-old designs! The graphics are rubbish by today's standards, but that's not the point. What you have to actually DO is just so cool, it doesn't matter. Games like Joust, Sinistar and Defender are still extremely worthwhile and rewarding experiences.

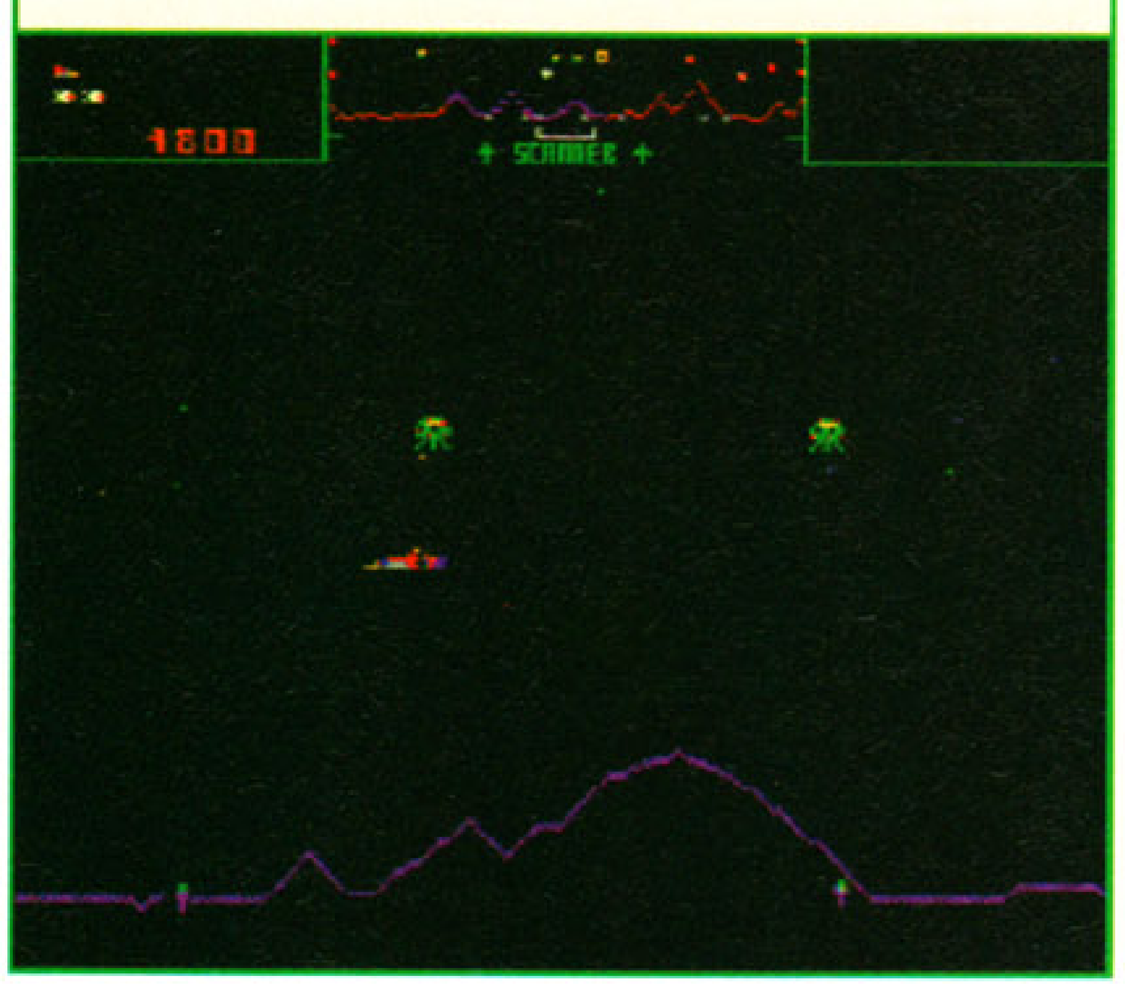
And the other really decent thing about this





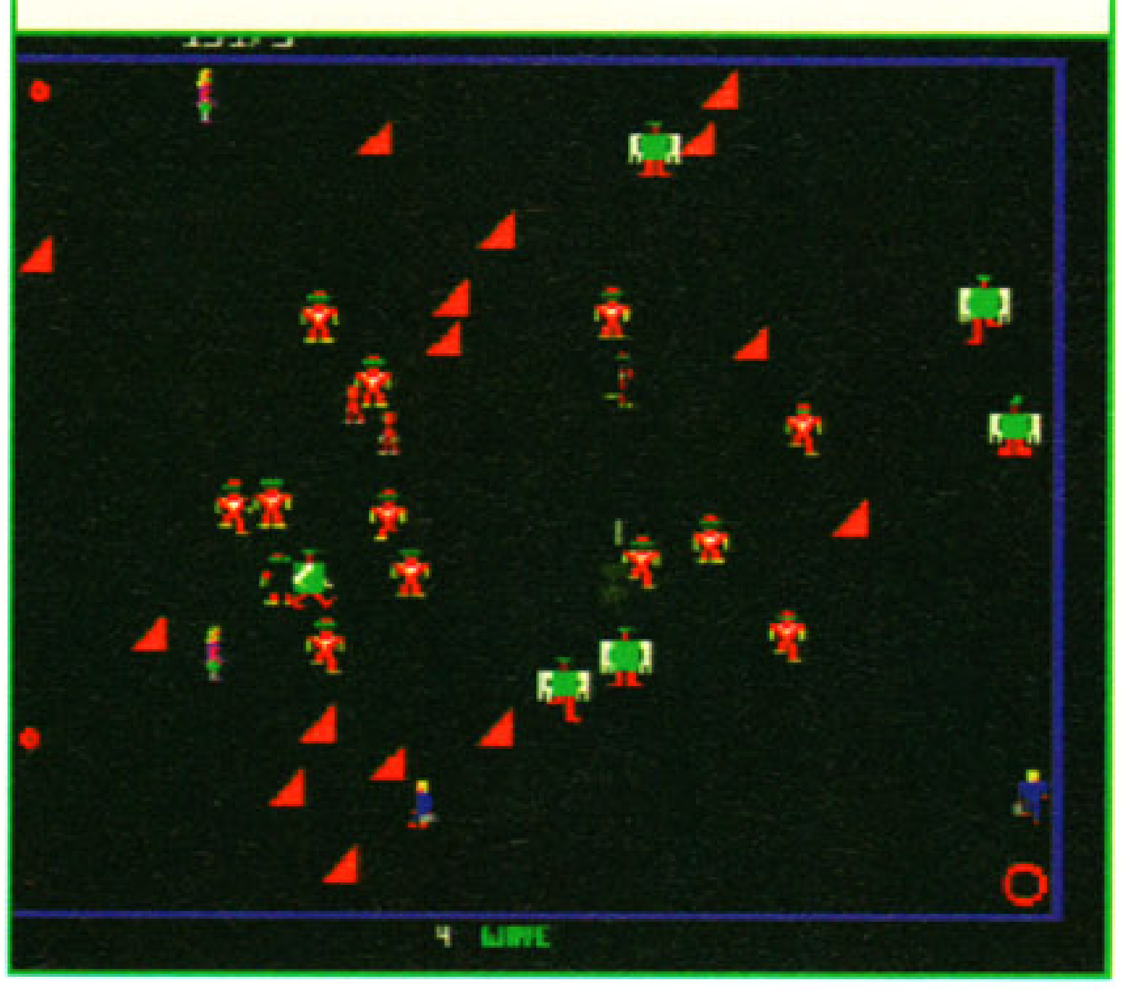
DEFENDER 2

Hmmmmm. Perhaps Stargate would have been a better addition to the Williams pack instead of Defender 2. Still, imagine (if you will) Defender 1 with some new monsters, but much the same gameplay. Only even tougher! This is probably the weakest link on t package, owing to the original's presence.



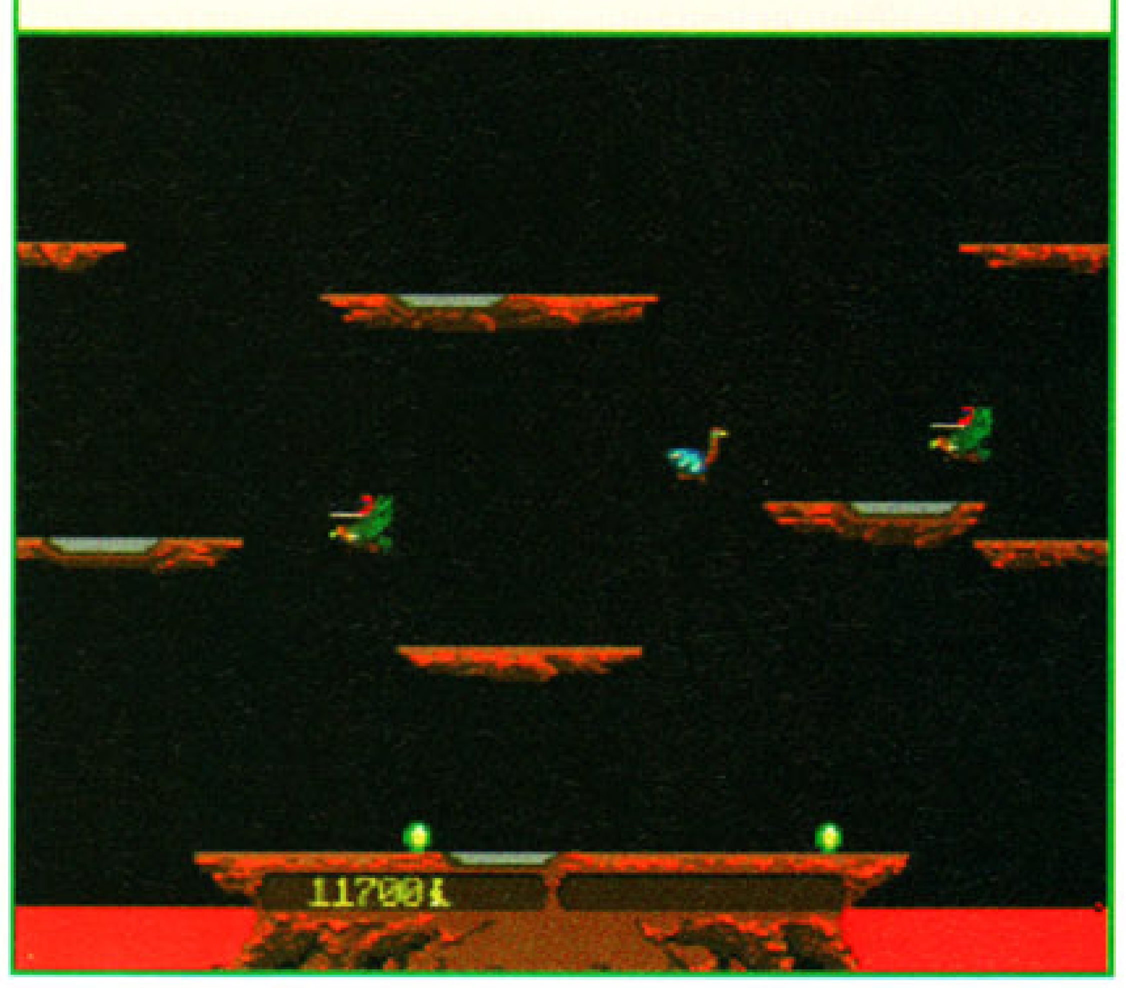
ROBOTRON 2084

Another truly hardcore blasting experience. Set in a series of single-screen environments, your job is to shoot all the aliens and save the humans. It's noteworthy in that movement direction and blasting directions are separated. It's a bit tough on the Saturn pad, mind you...

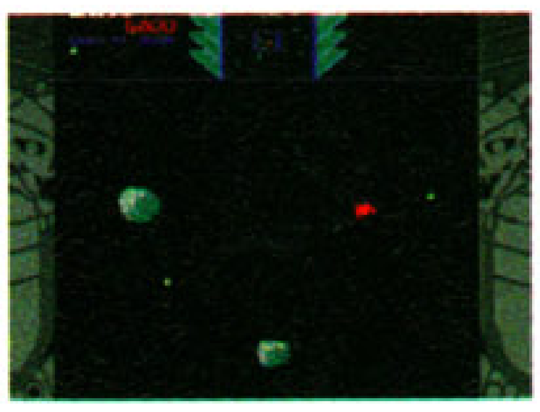


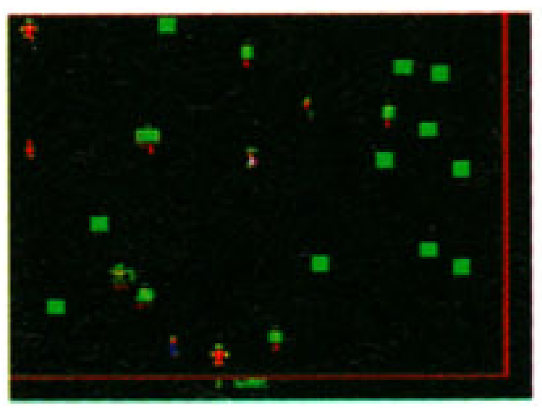
JOUST

Another epoch-making piece of software... and severely surrealistic! Clamber aboard your ostrich (yes, ostrich) and take to the skies, jousting with opposing riders! You need to descent on your foes from above to take them out and they need to do likewise to you. Again, a real test of true gamesmanship!



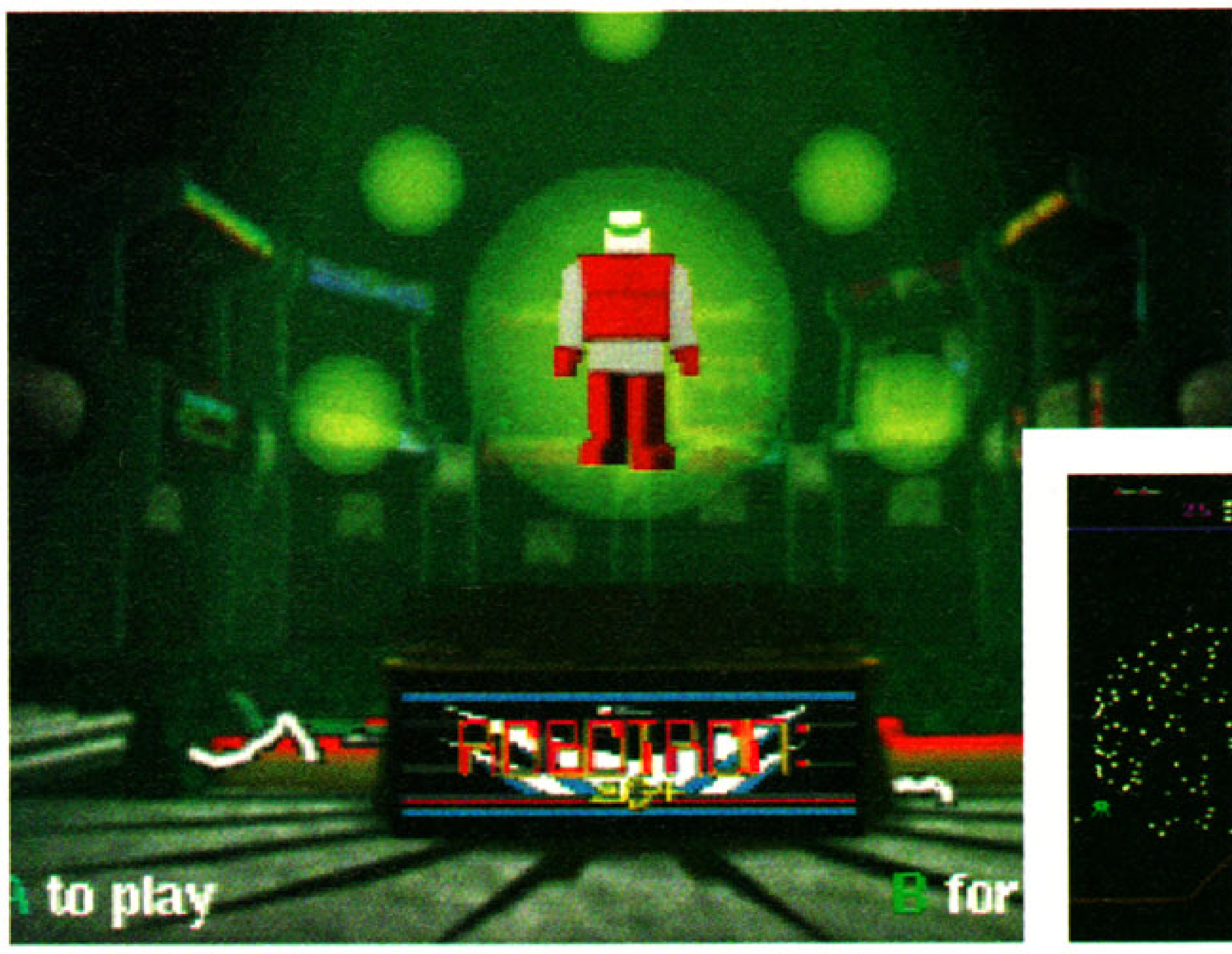
HITS



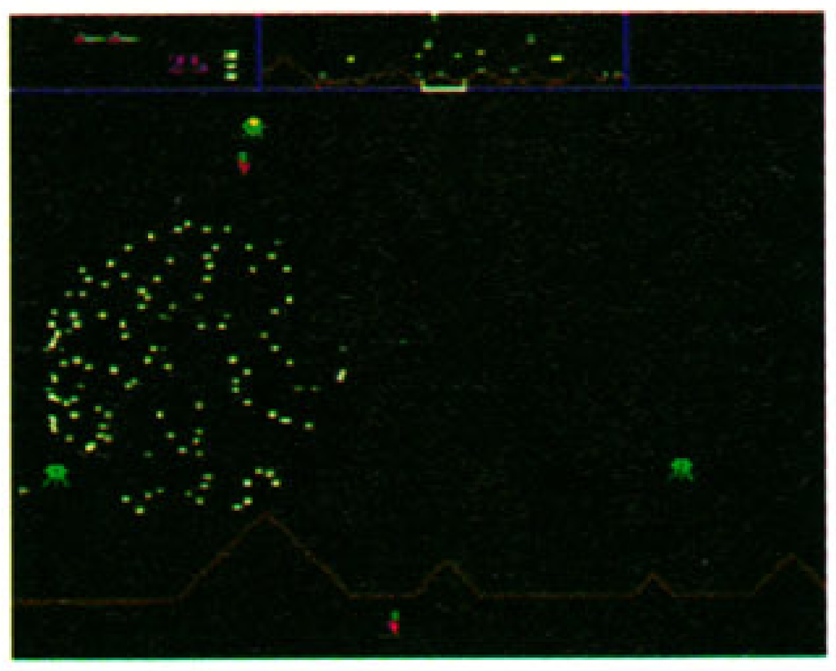




Joust, the world's first (and indeed only) ostrich battle game! It's still a classic videogame!



The front-end system is probably the most sophisticated part of the package!



Defender: those were the days eh readers?



Some Williams memorabilia in full digitised effect.

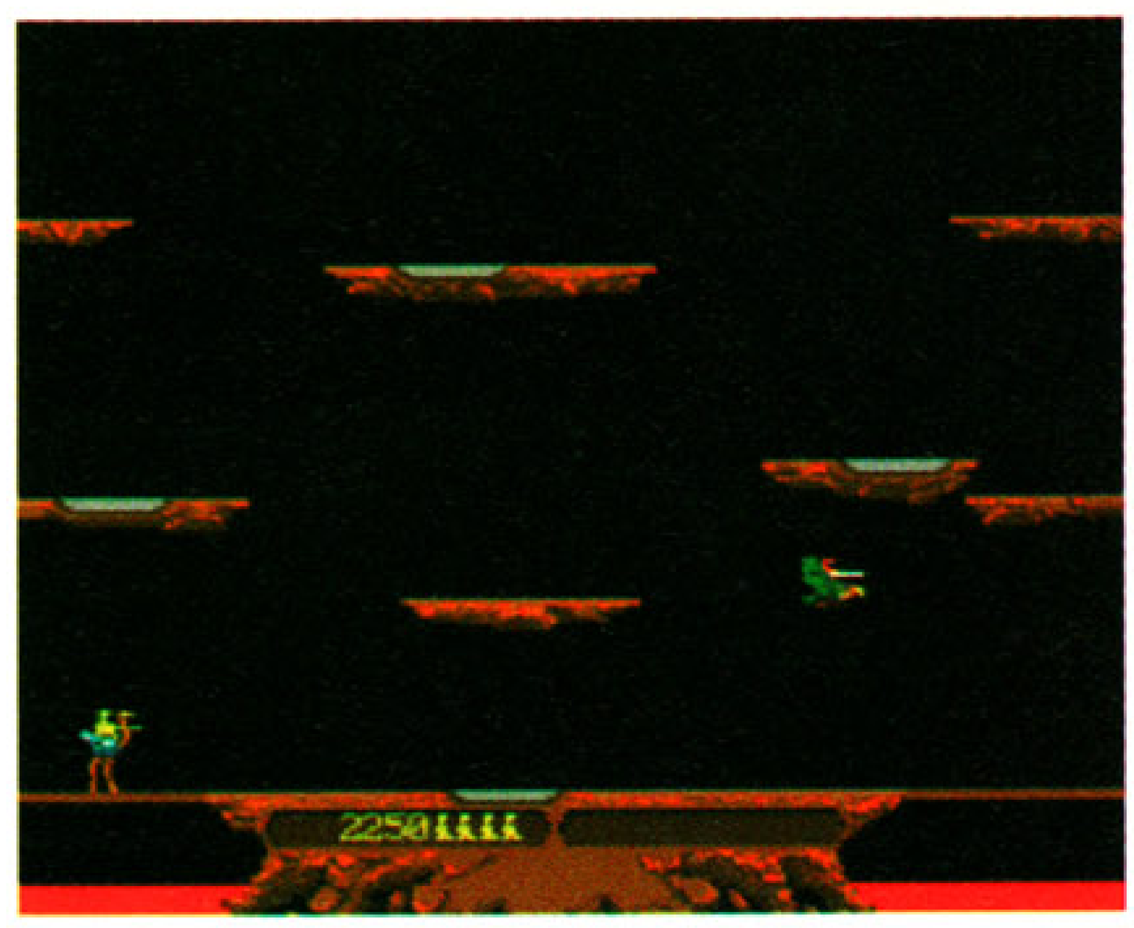
It's retro time again and this package includes some true classics! Joust, Robotron and Defender stand out as incredible gaming moments

pack in particular is the fact that with one notable exception, this is indeed Williams' Arcade Greatest Hits. Yes, you might moan about Bubbles being just a bit on the obscure side, but it's still cool. In fact, the only thing I'm just a bit upset about is the exclusion of Stargate from the pack.

But for me, this pack asks a lot of questions, like... what happened at Williams? True there was some return to form with games like Smash TV and NARC, which were reminiscent of the old coin-ops in terms of adrenalin-pumping gameplay, but it's a bit too much to believe that the same staff were responsible for the likes of NBA HangTime, Mortal Kombat and (shudder) WarGods. After all, the genius behind the best games in this pack - one Eugene Jarvis - still works at Midway to this day. I guess it's just one of those things...

But any way, I digress - back to this retro pack. The bottom line is, for something a little different, and indeed downright archaic, but still hugely enjoyable, I'd highly recommend that you seek this out. It's not going to appeal to everyone, but for those with a real interest in quality gameplay, it's extremely hard to ignore.

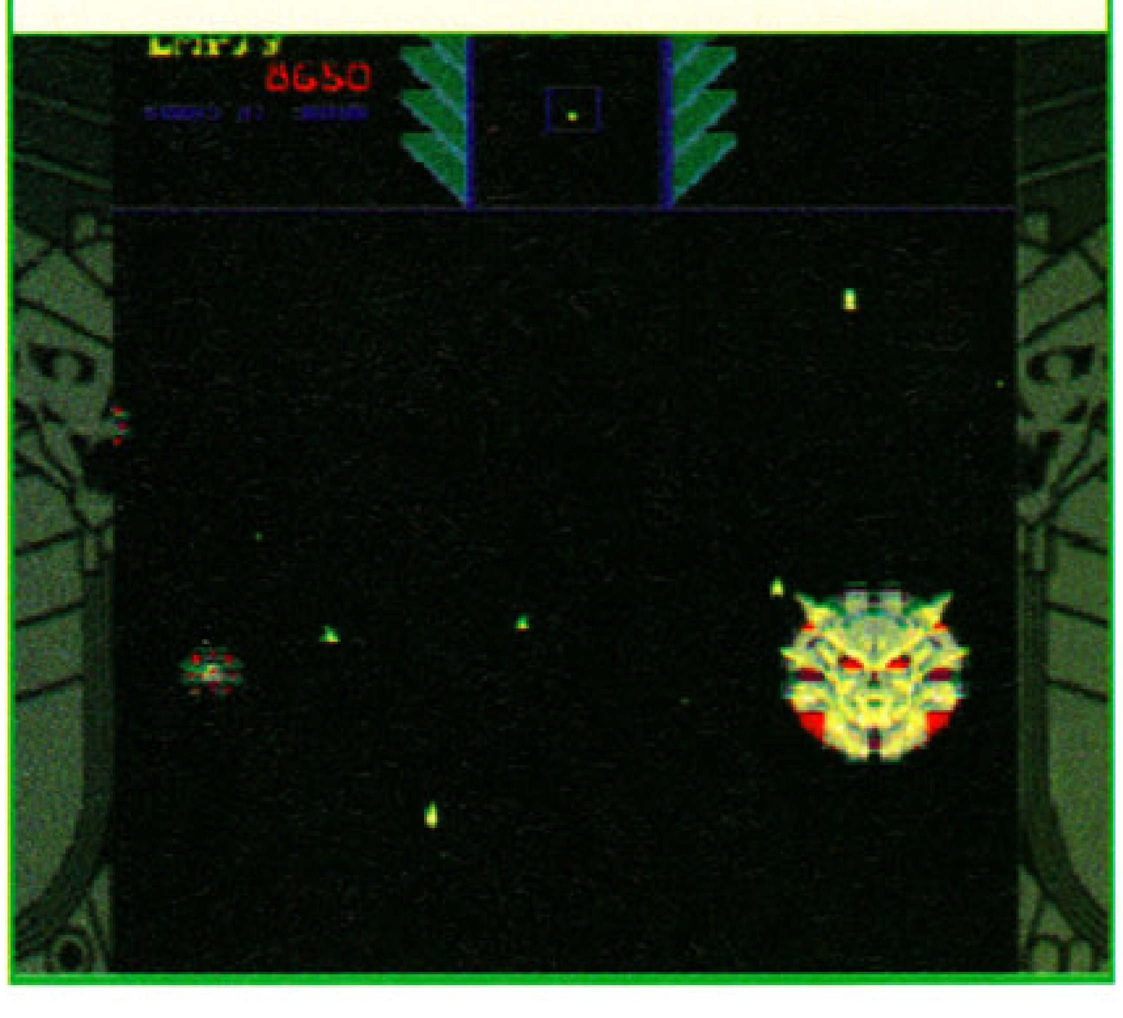
RICH LEADBETTER



Crap graphics, unrivalled gameplay. That's Joust.

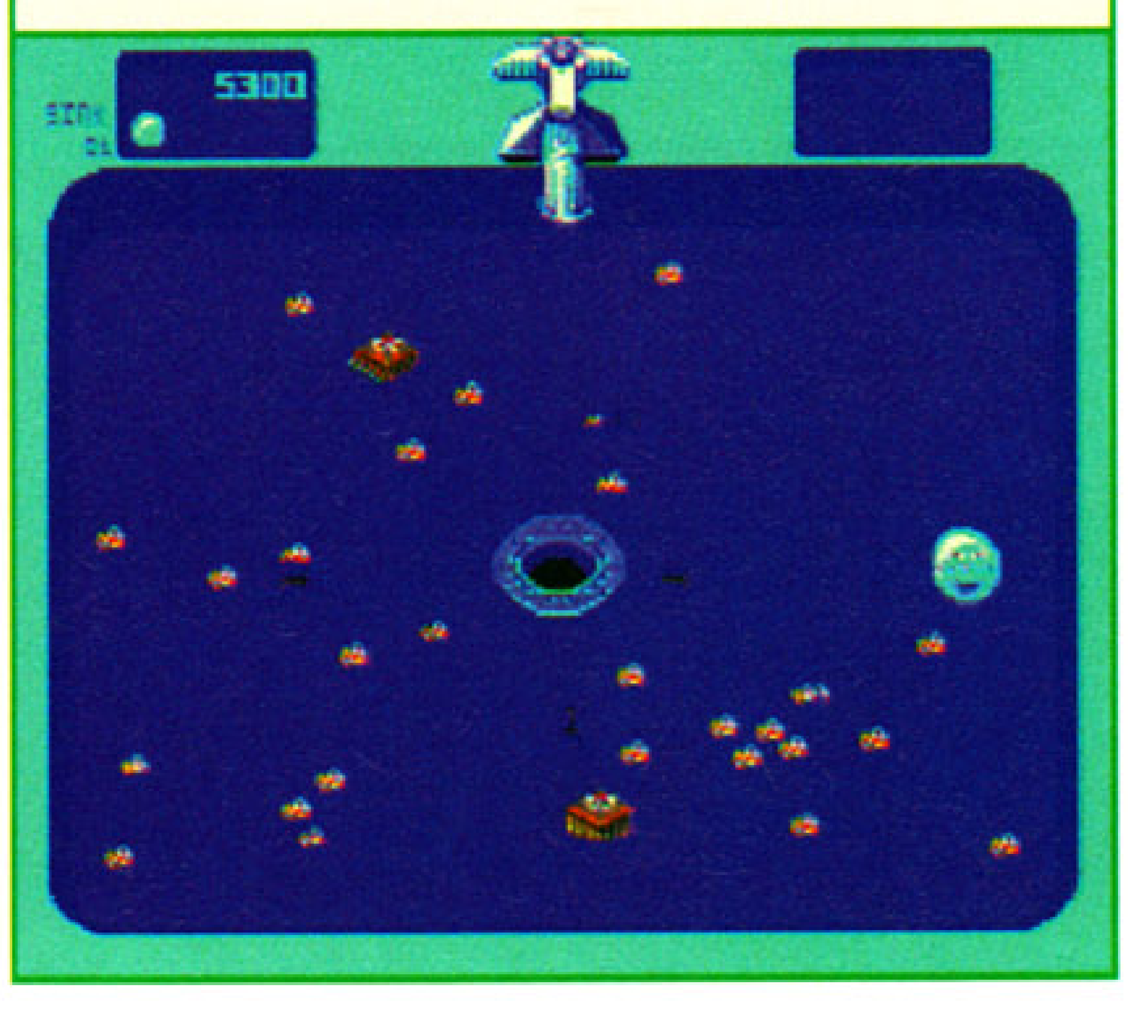
SINISTAR

One of the unjustly maligned videogames Williams produced. This multi-directionally scrolling blasting game sees you shooting meanies, mining asteroids and bombing the evil Sinistar himself! Excellent speech and the toughest challenge on the entire pack. Extremely compelling.



BUBBLES

All arcade-goers have no problem recognising the other Williams titles on the pack, but Bubbles? Hmmm. Set in a sink, it's a simple collect 'em up, with you dodging spiders, insects and the like... as well as avoiding the terrors of the almighty plughole! Yes it's obscure, but it's still entertaining.



It's not going to be for everyone, but for those after true gameplay challenges, these classic arcade titles are going to be difficult to beat...

graphics	43
sound	42
playability	90
lastability	88
overall	80%

RESIDENT EVIL

Reasons to buy a PlayStation become one fewer this month, as Capcom's long-awaited Saturn rendition of the incredible Resident Evil arrives in horrific style. Better have a change of underwear ready.

BY	CAPCOM
PRICE	TBA
STYLE	ARCADE/ADVENTURE
RELEASE	TBA

RECOMMENDED BY SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE 94%







Forget about Tomb Raider 2, Saturn Resident Evil is awesome!





Go on, play it with the curtains closed... I dare you.

Taking a break from the 2D beat 'em ups for which they have become synonymous, Capcom's latest Saturn development is the critically acclaimed Resident Evil. Originally titled Biohazard for its earlier Japanese release, the game offers a scenario whereby players are called to investigate a series of grisly murders around a secluded mansion at a place known as Raccoon City. As one of two members of the elite STARS Alpha Team, it becomes evident that the mansion has played host to a series of bizarre scientific experiments which early reconnaissance notes suggest have gone terribly wrong. Alpha Team's mission is to explore the mansion and eliminate everything within, find the missing Bravo Team and find out what the hell is going on.

The game itself works similarly to last year's massive hit Tomb Raider and the rather dated Alone in the Dark games, but is arguably superior to both. Basically, players find themselves trapped inside a vast mansion crawling with all manner of strange genetic mutations with an unquenchable thirst for blood. Protocol is quickly discarded, as players struggle to survive and escape the confines of the mansion. However, blocking the route to safety through the dark and dingy blood-splattered corridors are locked doors, the keys to which are usually hidden at the opposite side of the mansion at the other end of a diverse range of puzzles. These usually involve locating certain objects and exchanging them with others, or triggering a hidden switch to reveal a secret passageway. Some of these puzzles are huge, requiring a great deal of lateral thinking and forward planning, considering operatives are only able to carry a certain number of items at any given time.Of course, this could have the makings of a pretty boring game

BLOOD LETTING AND BED WETTING.

With the original PlayStation version of Resident Evil, the gore-factor became the source of much deliberation on the part of Sony. Unhappy with scenes of decapitated heads, rabid dogs and the like, the over-sensitive Sony of America demanded a censored version of the game for those faint-hearted Yanks. Unfortunately for UK PlayStation owners, this is the version of Resident Evil they received. Not so for UK Saturn owners however, as Sega are implementing a no-holds barred approach to Resident Evil, with all the horrific FMV footage and gore remaining intact.

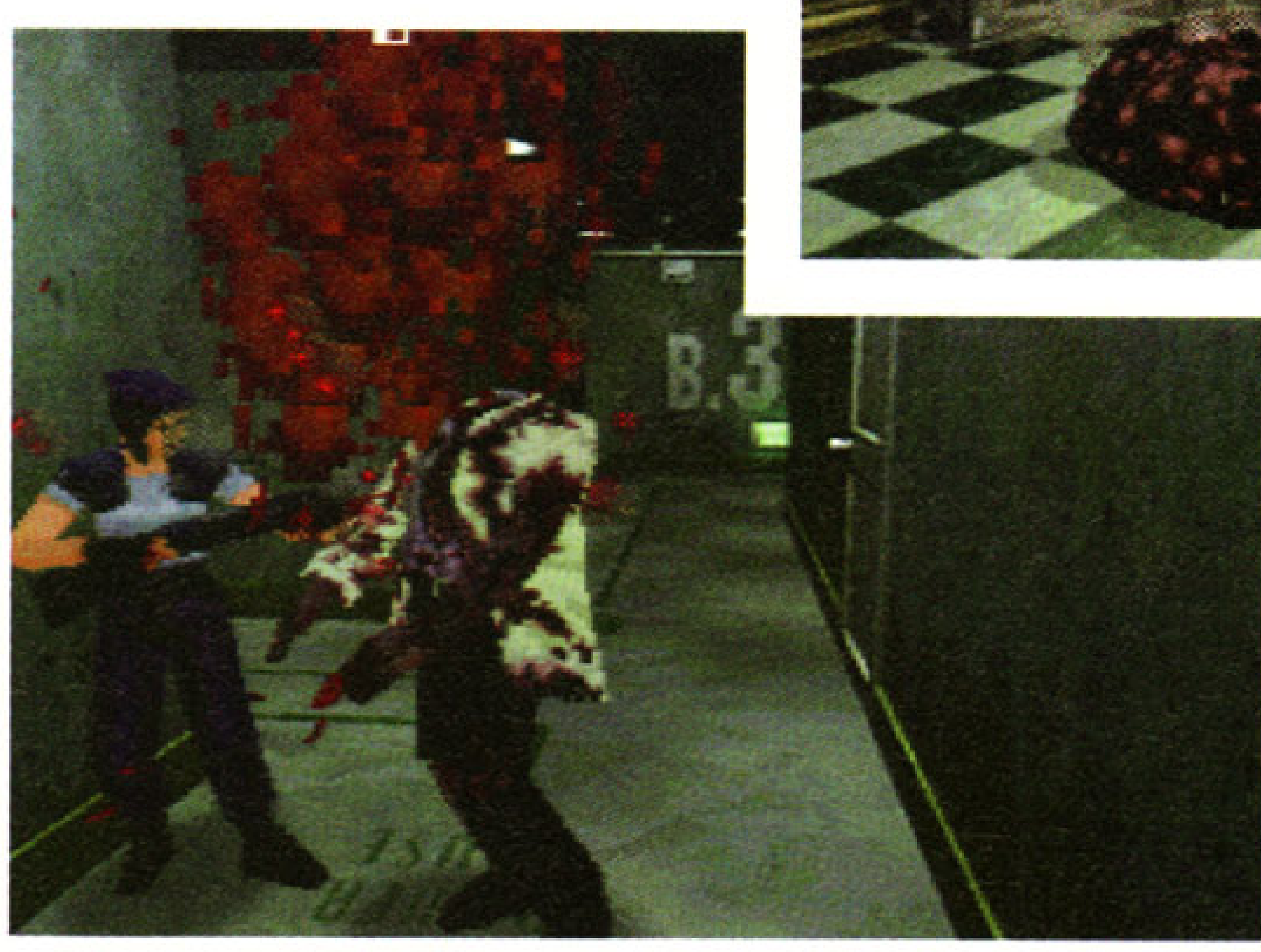




Finish the game fast enough and Jill is rewarded with an awesome rocket launcher.



The giant snake winds itself around Chris' body, preventing his escape.



The realistic blood-splatterings make executing a zombie a joy to behold.



More gore than you could shake a stick at.



It's a little known fact that Tarantino's inspiration for the movie From Dusk Till Dawn was Resident Evil. Probably.



Close-range shotgun blasts take a zombie's head clean off!

BETTER THAN THE PS VERSION?

Obviously, the big question regarding Saturn Resident Evil is whether it has been significantly enhanced to be considered superior to the original? Well, the bad news is that the characters lack the gouraud shading of the original but to compensate somewhat for this small deficiency, the Saturn version has more detailed and sharper backgrounds, several new monsters, different costumes, two bosses instead of one, slightly better loading times and the awesome battle mode. With all these extra bits thrown into the mixture, the Saturn version is SUPERIOR to the PS version - which bodes well for Saturn Resident Evil 2!





With the all-new Saturn exclusive features and the battle mode, it appears that Capcom have vastly improved the lacking replay factor of the original.

were it not for the vast amount action in Resident Evil, something which clearly distinguishes the game from the likes of Tomb Raider. For the most part, the gameplay is of the kill or be killed variety as players are stalked throughout the mansion and its grounds by a continuous onslaught of genetically mutated monsters. So locating the more powerful weapons and replenishing the limited supply of ammunition quickly becomes a priority for operatives wishing to stay alive. This gives way to some of the most gruesome and shocking scenes ever witnessed in a videogame, with huge amounts of bloodshed feared throughout.

Clearly these elements contribute to a fantastic game, but it is the intense feeling of terror heightened by the chilling music and eerie silences which sets Resident Evil apart from any other adventure game you may care to mention. The shit-scary feeling of your imminent demise as players are faced with a room full of zombies and rapidly deteriorating energy is quite unlike anything players will have experienced before in a videogame, being more akin to a Wes Craven horror flick. Indeed the game has a very cinematic quality to it, with the ensuing action being viewed from the dramatic fixed camera positions pioneered by Infogrames' Alone in the Dark series.

In fact, aside from the terrible voice-overs and over-emphasised hand gesticulations which provide the game with some unintentional light relief, there's very little to moan about with Resident Evil. The one complaint I would voice is that considering Capcom have been sat on this title for over 18 months, they could have done a little more with the Saturn version. Still, we'd have been more than happy with a straight port of the original game and as such, no one should have any complaints with the enhanced Saturn version of Resident Evil. The all-new Saturn features are most welcome and with the excellent battle mode (detailed elsewhere in this issue), it appears Capcom have made a serious stab at addressing the distinct lack of replay value which beset the original PlayStation version.

The bottom line is that for Saturn owners mourning the loss of Tomb Raider 2, Capcom's Resident Evil is a more than worthy alternative. The surprisingly non-linear gameplay offers players a deep and challenging gaming experience, with some excellent graphics rivalling those which emerge from within Sega of Japan.

LEE NUTTER



Jill blasts a zombie's head off as if it were a ripe melon.



Various camera angles afford players the best possible view.

Quite simply the best adventure title to arrive on the Saturn so far. Forget about Tomb Raider 2 and buy Resident Evil now!

graphics	93
sound	90
playability	94
lastability	93

overall 94%

WARCRAFT II

Trading big guns and tanks for axes and cross bows, EA's real-time war strategy game Warcraft II: The Dark Saga, proves to be a worthy alternative to a certain other PC port.

BY	ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	STRATEGY
RELEASE	JULY

RECOMMENDED BY SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE 91%

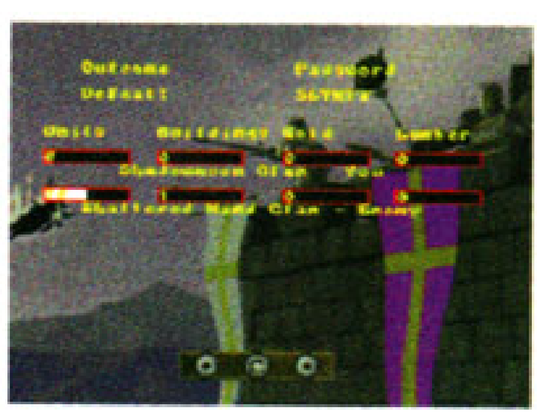
THE STRUGGLE OF GOOD VS EVIL

As with similar titles in this genre, players are able to take command of either the opposing forces. Each have their own mission objectives, strengths and weaknesses. The Orcs for example, are a brutal race whose strength and resilience to an enemy attack is at the expense of any intelligence. Conversely, the Human race exhibit a superior AI over their Orc counterparts, but are less resilient to an Orc attack.





With over 52 missions, it'll take you ages to finish it.



Passwords enable players to progress through the game.



Mining the surrounding environment for valuable minerals is essential for amassing a decent base of operations.



Grown tired of C+C, eh? Well feast your eyes upon Warcraft II.





Who needs Red Alert, eh?



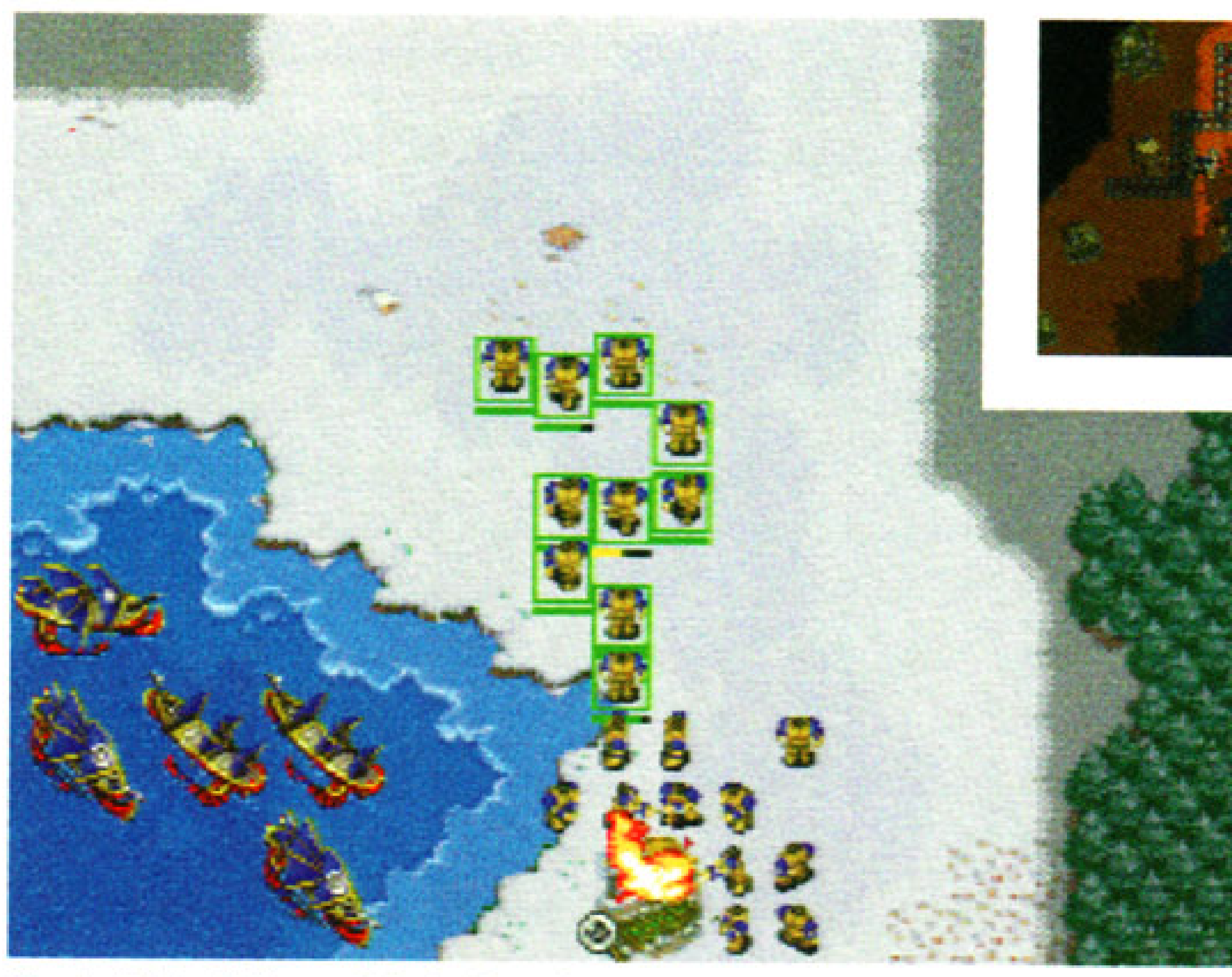
All new FMV bits. Lovely.

Every month our Q+A mailbag is besieged by letters requesting information on the possibility of a Saturn conversion of Command and Conquer: Red Alert. Well sadly, despite the massive success of the prequel, as of yet there's been no word on a Saturn conversion of Westwood Studio's classic PC title. So it's just as well that EA's latest Saturn offering is a conversion of the immensely successful Warcraft II: The Dark Saga. Taking a mediaeval slant on the C+C formula, the Saturn rendition is an enhanced version of the PC original and includes the Beyond the Portal expansion pack. It would appear that real-time point 'n' click war sim fans have a lot to smile about.

Warcraft II is a continuation of the ruthless clash between the Orc and Human civilisations. After a long and bloody war in the Kingdom of Azeroth, the Humans ventured across the Great Sea to escape the cruelty of the Orcish hordes and rebuild their shattered empire. Eager to engage in combat again, the Orcish Army constructed sea vessels and summoned huge flying creatures to follow the Human forces and attack their coastal encampments.

As the Commander of either of the two opposing factions, players attempt to construct and rule their mediaeval empire whilst engaging in real-time warfare over land, sea and air. Players begin each of the 52 mission scenarios with only a few peasants to command, and with the risk of an enemy invasion imminent, it quickly becomes a case of forward planning, prioritising tasks and effective management of resources. Initially, much of the time is taken up with cultivating the surrounding environment for valuable minerals to enable players to construct buildings and train the local peas-

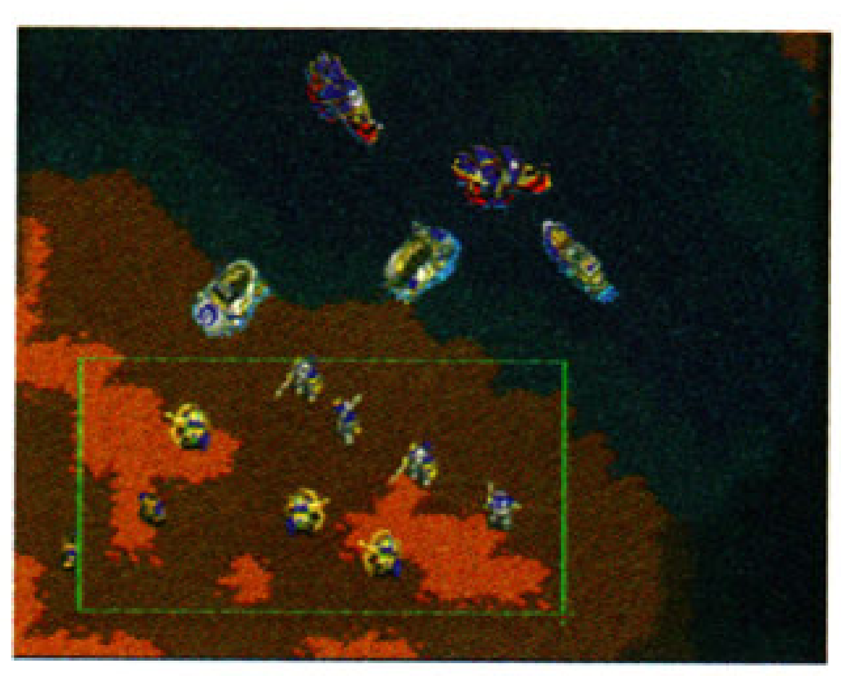
With the inclusion of the Beyond The Portal expansion pack and all-new FMV sequences, the Saturn version is superior to the PC original



The best bit of Warcraft II, is that players are able to control either the Orcs or the Human military forces. Awesome.







The artificial intelligence in Warcraft II is very high indeed, making for some tough battles.



Whilst the graphics may look a tad crap, Warcraft II is what we may refer to as a victory of gameplay over graphics.

ants. For instance, before any kind of military skirmish is possible, players need to amass a sizable army of peasants. However, the peasants need training, gold is mined to pay for the training, trees are fell to construct the buildings, farms are built to feed the peasants, barracks are built to house the peasants and so forth.

Eventually, players accumulate a base of operations and a formidable military force with which to take on aggressors. Of course, being set in a mediaeval fantasy world there's no tanks or gun-totting troops in Warcraft II. Instead, players do their best with a range of archers, ocean destroyers, catapults and axe-wielding soldiers. This is where military tactics come into play, as players send their troops to invade the enemy territory and conquer their heavily fortified base, leading to some huge battles on land and sea.

The same point 'n' click control method of the PC original has been retained for the Saturn rendition of Warcraft II, which will appear familiar to seasoned Command and Conquerors. From this players are able to command a lone peasant or an entire battalion with ease, by simply dragging boxes over them and selecting the appropriate command from the menu.

The only real gripe I have on an otherwise brilliant piece of software, is that Warcraft II is sadly missing any multiplayer options, meaning that like Saturn C+C, this is solo fun only. However, with a massive 52 levels included with different missions and objectives set across over 100 customisable maps, it remains an outstanding game. And not an easy one either, with some of the more complex missions taking hours, no days to complete as players battle against the tough computer AI.

As it stands, Warcraft II: The Dark Saga combines the construction elements of Sim City with the gung-ho warfare elements of C+C to produce a deep and involving game. With the inclusion of the Beyond The Portal expansion pack and all-new FMV sequences, the Saturn version is also superior to the PC original, something we don't often get chance to say. Highly recommended.

LEE NUTTER

THE DARK AGES

When playing Warcraft II: The Dark Saga, players will notice that only a very small section of the map around your base camp is viewable, with a dark shadow or mist being cast over the remaining landscape. This is so not to reveal the exact whereabouts of the enemy forces until players actually reach them, adding an element of surprise to the proceedings. More of the landscape is revealed when players advance their military forces over the terrain, so it's a good idea to explore the map before formulating a strategy, even if it means sacrificing a few men. But hey, that's war, right? Once more of the map becomes revealed, players are able to thwart a surprise enemy onslaught without incurring any substantial losses to their forces.

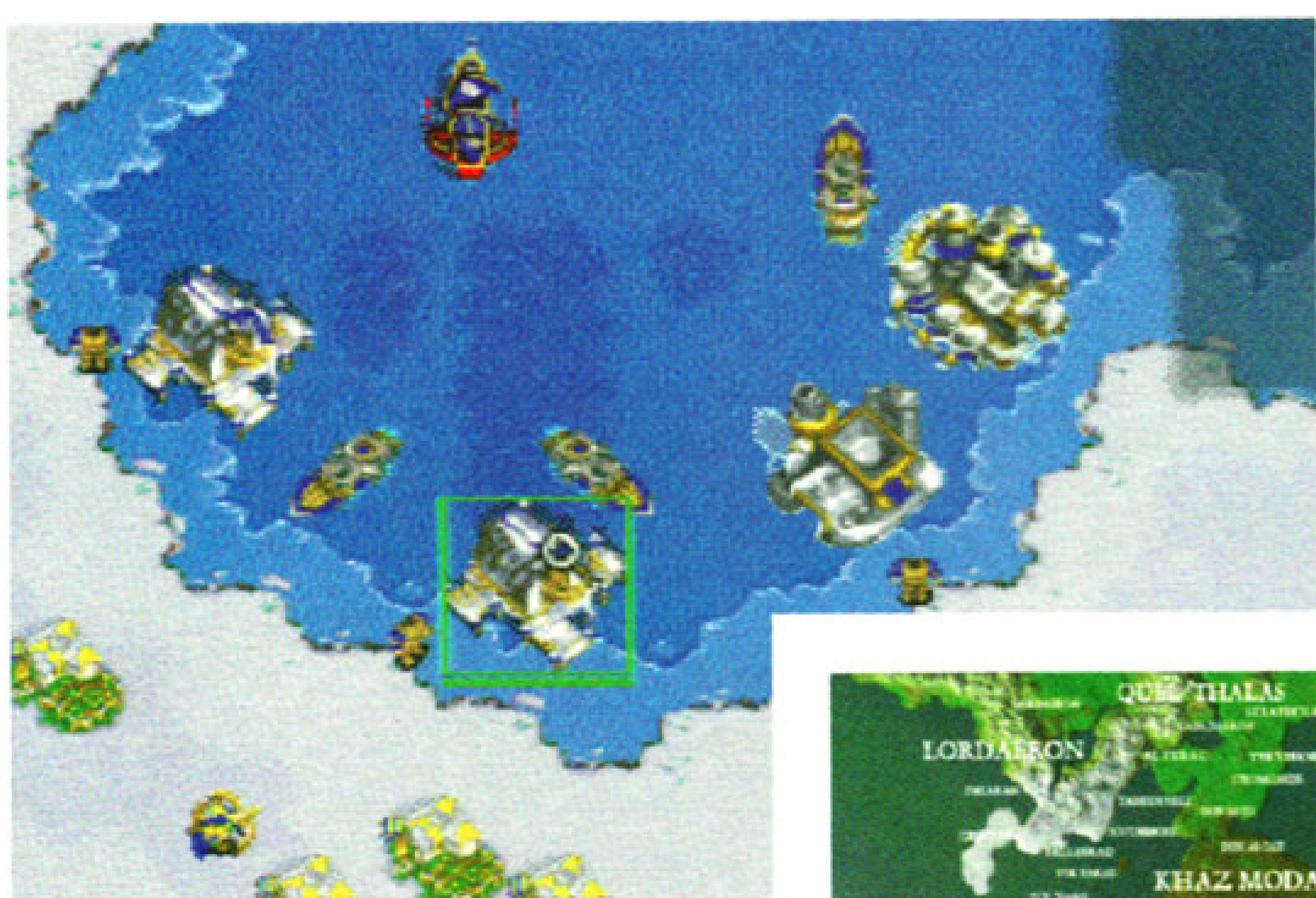


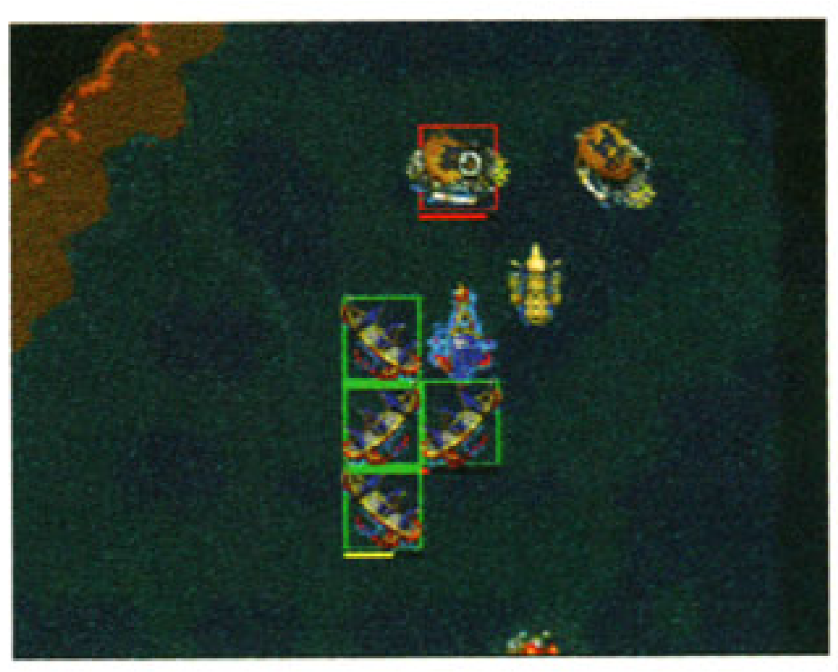


It may look complex, but Warcraft II is very simple to pick up.













The same point 'n' click control method of C+C has been implemented in Warcraft II, allowing players to control single peasants or entire battalions with relative ease.

Despite the simplistic graphics and the cloned C+C gameplay, Warcraft II is a highly enjoyable and compelling strategy warfare game. Definitely worth a look.

graphics	69
sound	80
playability	92
lastability	91
overall	91%

REVIEW

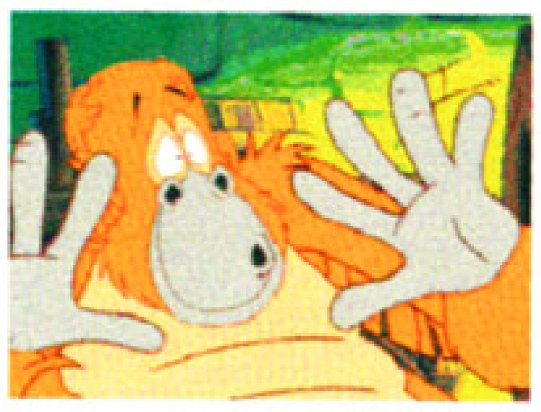
DISCWORLD 2

Considering the number of readers and callers who complain about the lack of adventure and role-play games on the Saturn, there must be a pretty high demand for them. Discworld 2 anyone?

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£39.99
STYLE	ADVENTURE
RELEASE	AUGUST



Basically, to summarise the review, if you like adventure games you'll like Discworld 2. If you don't, you won't. It's that simple!





Some more cool cartoon action from the intro (above). See if you can work out what's happening... I still haven't got a clue!

ABC... IT'S EASY AS ONE, TWO, THREE

You direct Rincewind using a cursor - point at a location, person or object, and a quick press of the C-button moves your wizard to that area, often scrolling the display as well, as many locations are spread over two or three screens. Pressing the B-button brings up some speech options - say hello, ask a general question, ask about a specific object or say goodbye,and the B-button is also the 'action' button for opening doors, picking up objects and the like, while the A-button makes Rincewind carry out a more thorough examination of whatever you click on.





Looks like I drew the short straw this time - meaning that I have to concentrate and dedicate a large chunk of my day to playing an adventure game. There's going to be missions to remember, clues to remember, characters to remember, and I've still got to make sure there's enough room left over in my brain to remember more essential things like the way home from the office. But there's big trouble in Discworld, and it needs a hero to help restore life to normal after the Grim Reaper has mysteriously disappeared. Any guesses who the hero's going to be? It's you of course, get playing...

The first thing you notice is the dialogue - there's loads of it, and as you get into the the first few tasks of collecting ingredients for various magic spells, you notice all the characters happily chat away to you, and exchange



Outside the entrance to the pub... Taxi!





observations, jokes and hopefully clues to help you in your quest, and most characters are voiced by actors as well, making the game sound very professional. There's also an option to have the speech popping up on the screen in subtitles as well, and fortunately you can skip through the dialogue easily if you accidentally ask someone the same question twice, which is dead handy, as some of the conversations can go on for ages. It's important to talk to all the people you meet on your travels as well, as after a thorough probing, the locals usually point you in the right direction, or give you something of use. That's not to say everyone you meet helps you... there's a huge number of red-herrings and diversions to keep you entertained along the way.

But that's one of the biggest problems to be honest, as it quickly becomes a bit tedious listening to all the crap spouted by the various inhabitants, so rapid use of the 'skip' button is often called for. The game definitely tries slightly too hard to be funny as well - do you



If you read the above quote from Rincewind, he's just noticed a "clown's hooter" on the floor - Discworld 2 'humour' in effect!





Why walk through the streets, when there's a pub to go to?



Chat to the doorman for a while, and he'll give you a brochure.



The local cafe. Most of the dishes are 'rodent-based'... I doubt Egon Ronay would be impressed.



A cool picture from the intro (above) and the rest of the game looks just as nifty as well!







The two pics above show the docks in all their glory. Don't ask about the fish, the net and the bird though. It's a long story...

EMOTIONAL BAGGAGE

Your companion for the adventure is a strange hybrid between dog and suitcase known as Luggage. The little chap follows you around, and is a great place to store some of the more obscure things you stumble across - stunned birds, maps, horns and even flamingos can be found early on, and make sure you visit the local shop, as the woman who works there gives you most things you need for free!



All of the locations are very cool. Colourful backgrounds and a good few animated characters, give the game an excellent style...

remember the old '1001 joke books' full of cheesy puns? Hilarious compared to most of Discworld 2's surreal observations, and although the odd snigger did break though my calm and steely exterior, the game leaves you suffering from a major overdose of cheesy humour.

Still, as you'd expect from a graphic adventure, the locations are very nice. Colourful backgrounds, and a good few animated characters, give the game an excellent cartoon style, and for people that like their games a bit more deep and thoughtful, there's definitely enough of a challenge in Discworld 2 to keep you busy for a very long time... most of the puzzles and tasks are just about hard enough, without being too obscure and difficult, and there's plenty of hints and clues to nudge you in the right direction, should you get confused.

I'm sure you're all familiar with the format for reviews of adventure games by now - I'll talk about the game's finer points for a while, and then summarise my review in this final paragraph by recommending it to seasoned fans of the genre, and giving it a respectable-but-not-too-high score. The problem is, games like this just won't appeal to every Saturn owner, and although Discworld 2 is a fine enough example of an adventure game, and you do start to feel yourself being drawn into the game after a while, there's still not much chance your typical MegaMix or Sega Rally fan would appreciate it.

If powerslides, dragon punches and beserker barrages are more your thing, avoid Discworld 2, there's way too much thinking involved! But if your attention span is long enough to allow you to read the whole of this review, chances are that you'll get some enjoyment from Discworld 2, so add a few extra percent to the overall score as a reward for being able to concentrate on reading this far.

GARY CUTLACK





If Mrs Cake can see the future, why hasn't she won the lottery?

A competent, enjoyable adventure that won't appeal to everyone but does have a certain charm that'll go down well with adventurers.

graphics	86
sound	88
playability	75
lastability	85
overall	82%

SEGA SATURN™ tips

Okay you slackers, just because the Summer's here it doesn't mean we're going to be enjoying the sun. No siree! In fact the SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE team have been busy sweating buckets in order to bring you the coolest cheats, codes and tips for all your favourite Saturn games. Of course, if you want to help us avoid heat exhaustion and dehydration, send all your tips and chilled drinks to: Sega Saturn Saturn Tips Section, 37-39 Mill Harbour, Isle of Dogs, London E14 9TZ

WWF IN YOUR HOUSE

SUPER PINS AND TAUNTS

Each wrestler has a special super pin move. To perform these, you must wait until the 2nd round. Immediately after the announcer says **"PIN HIM"** press the **A button once** to pin your opponent, then do the super pin move.

SUPER PINS

Shawn Michaels: D-U-P-SK-SK-P
Goldust: D-U-SK-D-U-SK
Vader: D-U-K-K-K-K
Hunter Hearst Helmsley: D-U-SP-SP-SP-SP
Owen Hart: D-U-P-P-K-K
Ahmed Johnson: D-U-P-SP-SK-K
Bret Hart: D-U-SP-D-U-SP
British Bulldog: D-U-P-SK-SP-K
The Undertaker: D-U-SK-SK-SP-SP
Ultimate Warrior: D-U-P-P-P-K

TAUNTS

Each wrestler has a taunt that can be performed by pressing **UP** and **BLOCK** at the same time.



DARKLIGHT CONFLICT

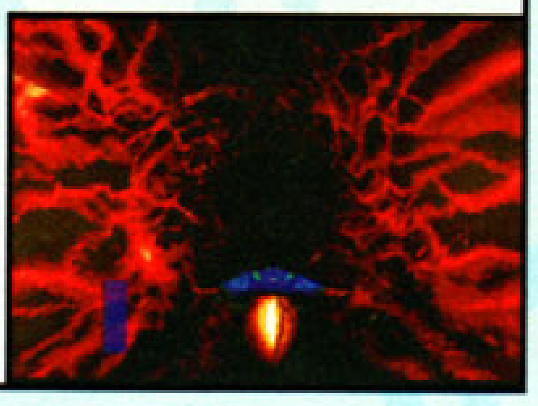
CHEAT MENU

This handy little cheat provides access to all levels, an invulnerability option and even a smart bomb option. First, go into the options menu and press the following:

DOWN, DOWN, UP, X, LEFT, LEFT, R, L and START.

This will now add a new option to the main menu entitled **"EXTRA."**





SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER II TURBO

Use these cool codes to access a number of hidden characters in Capcom's nifty puzzle game. Now you can do some serious damage!

SECRET CHARACTERS

PLAY AS ANITA

To play as Anita, Donovan's companion, on the Player Select screen, highlight Morrigan, **hold Start,** move over to Donovan and **press A.** For player two, use the same process but start at Felicia.

PLAY AS MEI-LING

To play as Mei-Ling, Lei-Lei's sister, on the Player Select screen, highlight Morrigan, **hold Start,** move over to Lei-Lei and **press A.** For player two, use the same process but start at Felicia (below).



PLAY AGAINST DEVILOT

To play against Devilot on Stage 7, you must meet the following requirements before defeating your opponent on Stage 6. Play in Arcade mode, selecting the Normal or Hard difficulty setting. Finish a round under 60 seconds. Finish a round with a Super Finish. Do at least a 4-hit chain combo in a round. Your maximum power gem count (the counter right under the chain combo counter that shows up at the end of a match) has to be at least 20. Don't continue.







PLAY AS AKUMA

To play as Akuma, without having to earn him from the "Street Battle" mode, on the Character Select screen, highlight Morrigan, **hold Start then press Down, Down, Down, Back, Back, Back and any button.**

PLAY AS DEVILOT

To play as Devilot without having to earn her from the "Street Battle" mode, on the Character Select screen, highlight Morrigan, **hold Start then press Back, Back, Back, Down, Down, Down,** wait for the timer to reach 10 then press any button.

PLAY AS DAN (EASY WAY)

To play as Dan, without having to earn him from the "Street Battle" mode, on the Character Select screen, highlight Morrigan, **hold Start, press Back, Back, Back, Down, Down, Down then any button.**





SHINING THE HOLY ARK

PIXIE LOCATIONS

Hopefully, this information will satisfy the thousands of queries we've had from anxious Holy Ark fans. Below is the complete list of Pixie locations, which should prove invaluable in your travels.





1. **Desire Mine:** Succubus 1 - Muran
2. **Right outside Desire Mine:** Leprechaun 1 - Dana
3. **Desire Village:** Incubus 1 - Lantano
4. **Forest of Confusion:** Fairy 1 - Daisy
5. **Forest of Confusion:** Pixie 1 - Maple
6. **Desire Village:** Pixie 2 - Cherry
7. **Forest Cave:** Fairy 2 - Iris
8. **Forest Cave:** Leprechaun 2 - Tak
9. **Forest Cave:** Incubus 2 - Enjewel
10. **Forest Cave:** Pixie 3 - Willow
11. **Town of Enrich:** Incubus 3 - Masakari
12. **Town of Enrich:** Succubus 2 - Dahlia
13. **Town Well:** Succubus 3 - Roberia
14. **Dungeon Well:** Pixie 4 - Cedar
15. **Enrich Dungeon:** Leprechaun 3 - Morgan
16. **Enrich Dungeon**: Fairy 3 - Camellia
17. **Forest of Aborigine:** Incubus 4 - Krupis
18. **Forest of Aborigine:** Leprechaun 4 - Kokus
19. **Forest of Aborigine:** Fairy 4 - Peony
20. **Aborigine Mansion:** Leprechaun 5 - Zircon
21. **Aborigine Mansion:** Incubus 5 - Liknis
22. **Aborigine Mansion:** Succubus 5 - Orlea
23. **Graveyard Catacombs:** Succubus 4 - Lacey
24. **Mountain Cave:** Fairy 5 - Lily
25. **Mountain Cave:** Succubus 6 - Ripanos
26. **Mountain Cave:** Leprechaun 6 - Mangus
27. **Mountain Cave:** Pixie 5 - Palm
28. **Far East Village:** Pixie 6 - Apple
29. **Far East Village:** Fairy 6 - Azalea
30. **South Shrine:** Incubus 6 - Cypress
31. **South Shrine:** Succubus 7 - Kathorea
32. **South Shrine:** Leprechaun 7 - Darbie
33. **Enrich Dungeon - New Section:** Incubus 7 - Aster
34. **Enrich Dungeon - New Section:** Pixie 7 - Lime
35. **West Shrine:** Pixie 8 - Pear
36. **West Shrine:** Fairy 7 - Sisal
37. **West Shrine:** Incubus 8 - Adonis
38. **East Shrine:** Fairy 8 - Mimosa
39. **East Shrine:** Leprechaun 8 - Solo
40. **East Shrine:** Pixie 9 - Plum
41. **Mirage Village:** Succubus 8 - Viola
42. **Outside Mirage Village:** Leprechaun 9 - Stilt
43. **Tower of Illusion:** Incubus 9 - Croton
44. **Tower of Illusion:** Succubus 9 - Lunaria
45. **Tower of Illusion:** Fairy 9 - Primrose
46. **Tower of Illusion:** Leprechaun 10 - Eric
47. **Desire Mine - New Section:** Succubus 10 - Natasha
48. **Desire Mine - New Section:** Fairy 10 - Clyde
49. **Desire Mine - New Section:** Pixie 10 - Baldric
50. **Desire Mine - New Section:** Incubus 10 - Boris









IMPACT RACING

CHEAT CODES

Okay, so JVC's mediocre driving game is hardly in the same league as Sega Rally or Daytona USA but somebody bought it! For those sad few, here are a handful of cheats and codes to make an easy game even more of a doddle. Enter the following codes on the password screen:

ALLTOOLEDUP: All Weapons
BONUS.LEVELS: Six Bonus Levels
ENDGAMESLEVEL: Final Track
RABBITBADGER: Level Select
JOURNEYS.END: Sound Test



STREET RACER

VARIOUS CHEAT CODES

Here are a few handy codes for UbiSoft's highly acclaimed racer. Follow the instructions below to find the Gold Cup, an extra car (complete with secret rabbit driver!) and a few new courses.





ACCESS SILVER CUP

Enter **TRAFIK** on the password screen to advance to the Silver Cup.

ACCESS GOLD CUP

Enter **NEJATI** on the password screen to access the Gold Cup.



ACCESS PLATINUM CUP, RABBIT CAR AND THREE NEW COURSES.

Enter **DOUGAL** on the password screen. You'll now gain access to the Rabbit Car, three new courses and the Platinum Cup circuit.

ADVANCED OPTIONS

Enter **TURGAY** on the password screen to access a further set of options.





Shining the Holy Ark

FINAL PART



Welcome to the final part of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE's exhaustive Shining the Holy Ark tips guide! We haven't settled for simply reprinting the Internet FAQ document (which is packed with errors). We've mapped the entire game and played it through to its completion. So everything here is 100% guaranteed accurate and that's the all-important difference Here's RICH LEADBETTER with the final instalment plus Shining battle tactics!

MIRAGE VILLAGE/ TOWER OF ILLUSION

After collecting all three sacred treasures, go back to the King at Enrich. He'll point you to a small room inside the castle which has an intriguing mural. Check the mural and then use all three Sacred Treasures. You're warped off to Mirage Village where a new challenge awaits.

First of all, visit the village and get as much of the weapons and armour as you can. Then it's time to visit the tower. It's totally transparent, and only becomes solid if you solve the riddle of the stones in front - which is the #1 most popular tips call we're getting at the moment.

A really easy way to solve the puzzle is as follows. Rather than following the cryptic instructions, just do the following:

1. Hold down B and move over the stone from all directions. If you get a noise, move on to the next stone...

2. If you don't, turn yourself around 90 degrees and go back to step one. As soon as you've activated all three stones, head for the tower!

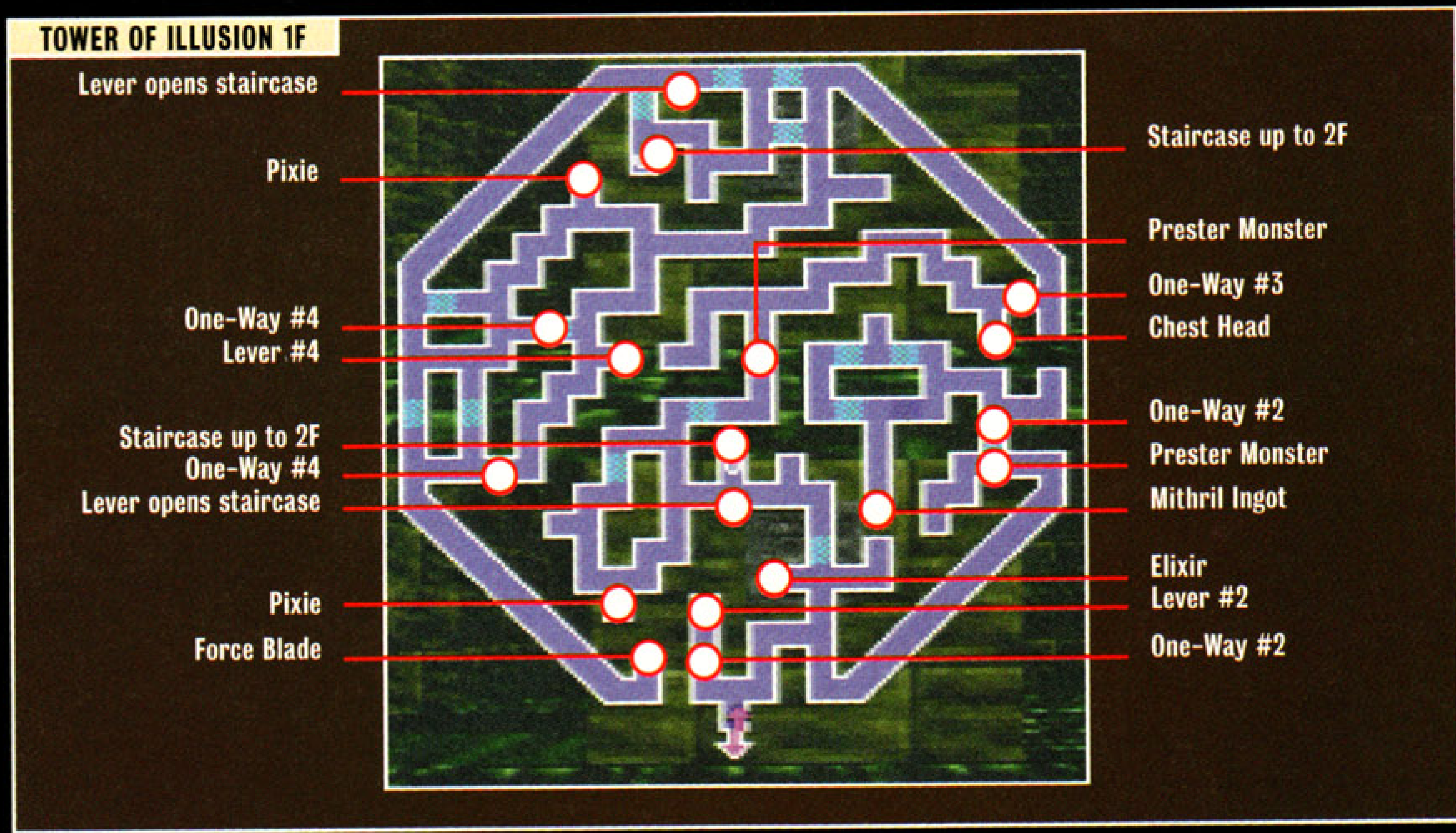
Once inside the tower, things are pretty straightforward. Basically, the aim of every floor is to find the lever that opens the hidden staircase up and then find the stairs. Easy. Tower of Illusion 1F has a number of one-way water streams that can be reversed by pulling levers (the levers and one-ways are matched up on the map). Also note that 1F is unique in that it has TWO ways up. Do the centre staircase first, go up to 2F and get the lunar shard then go back down and go to the other staircase.

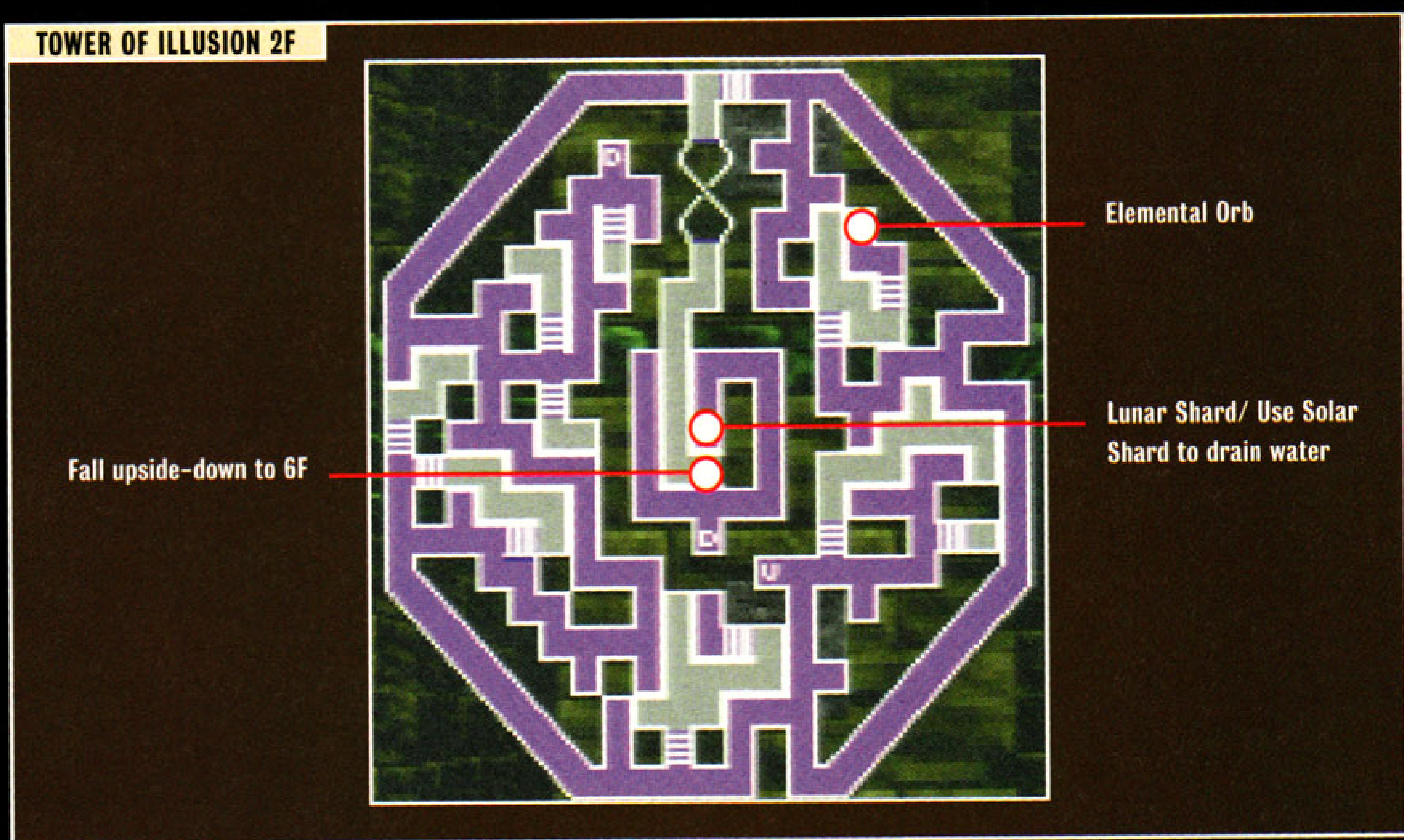
Work your way up the tower. On 5F you need to add the lunar shard to the mural to lower the ceiling, which will let you up to 6F. Here you find the solar shard. Use return magic to get you back to 1F, go up the centre staircase to 2F, use the solar shard on the bas relief and that drains out all of the water. Go through the inverter to make you upside down and "drop up" to 6F. Here it's a simple case of going south through the inverter and making your way around to the boss. Once he's defeated, you're warped to 7F where your main characters are put through a ceremony to make them even more powerful!

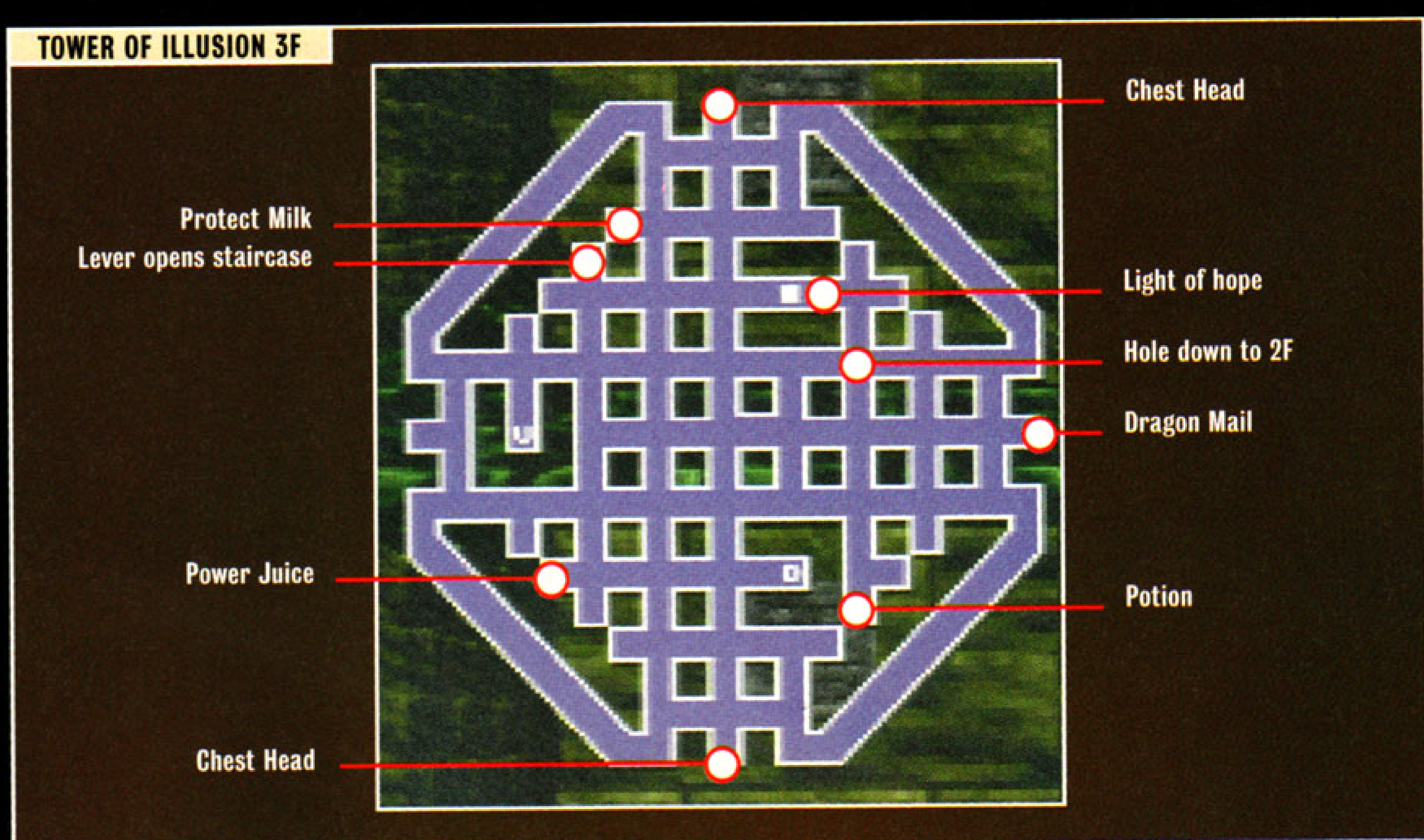
Use return magic to get you back to the village, make sure you've got all the really good objects (including sale objects) and then go back to the portal and return to Enrich!

















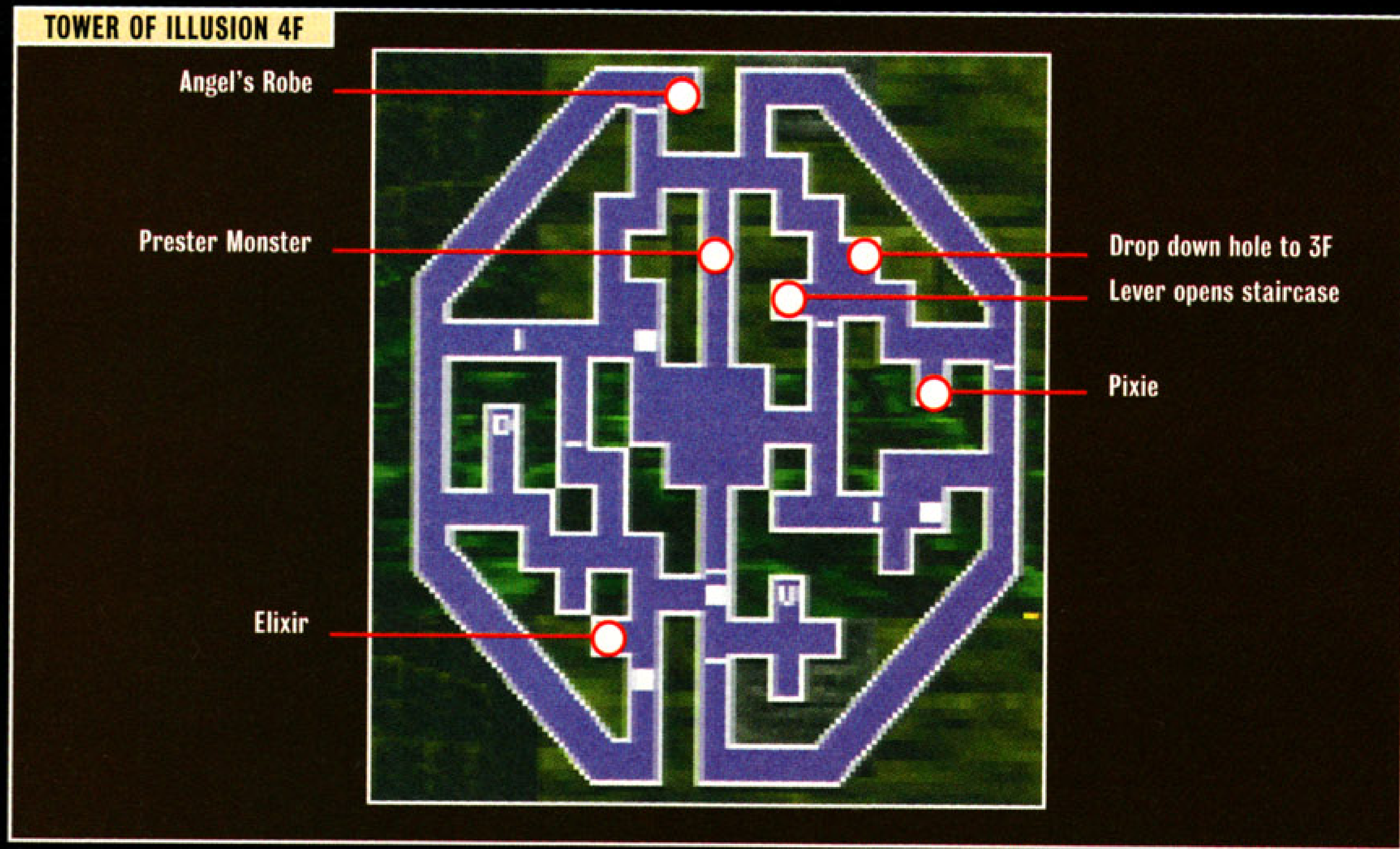
If you leave a shop without buying something, often the shopkeeper offers you some cool kit... Keep trying it!

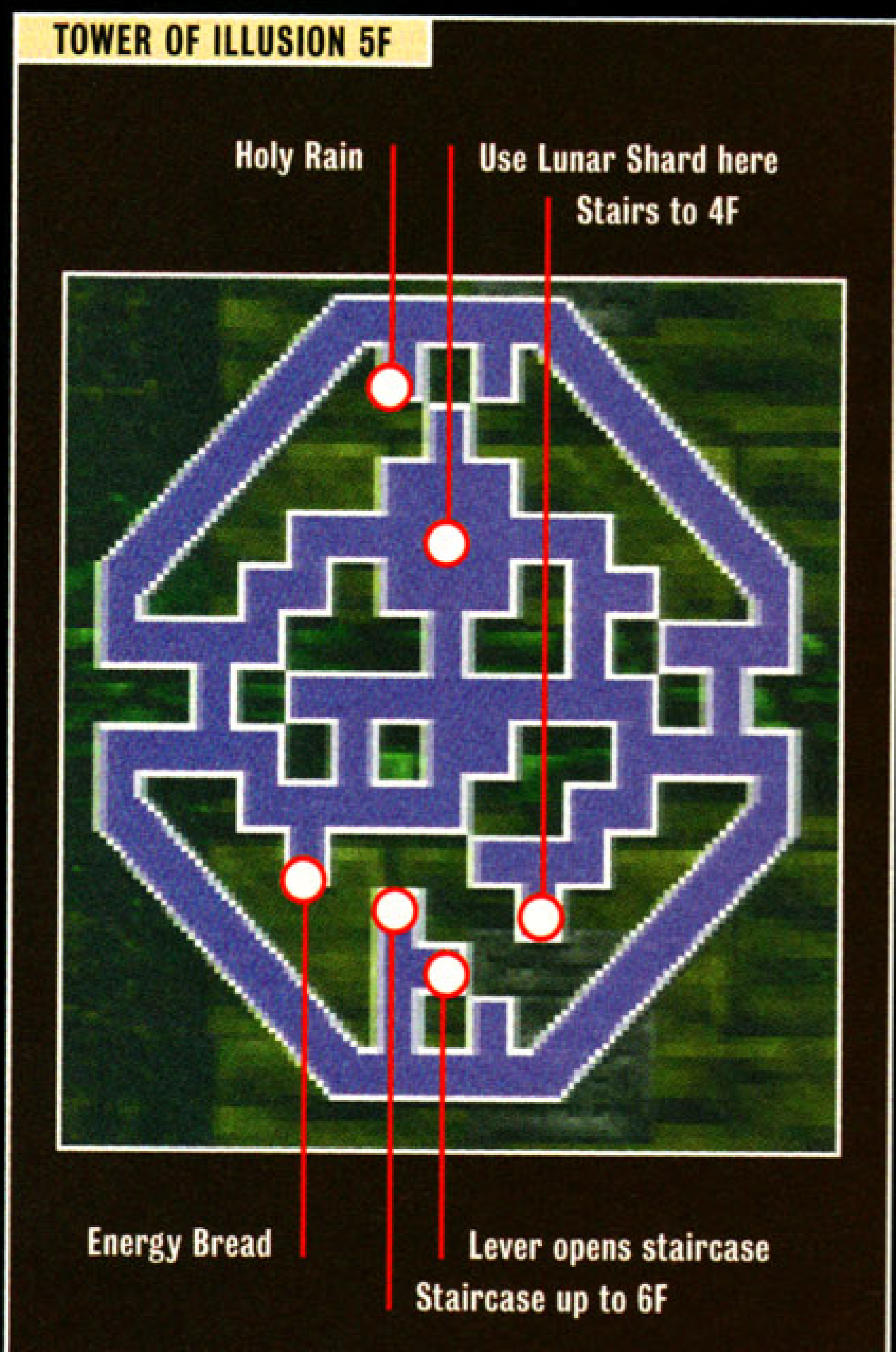


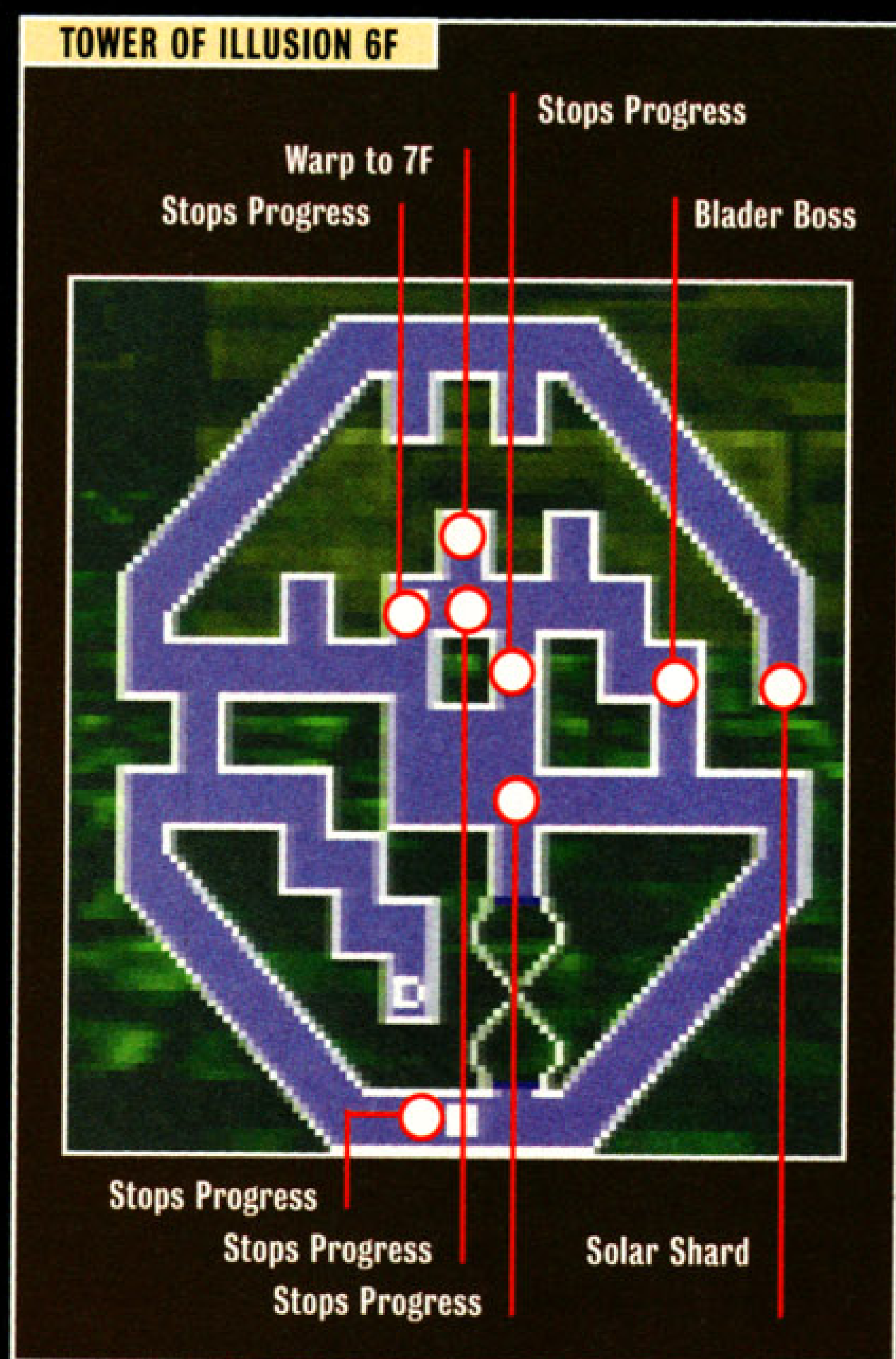


Intense puzzling action in the Tower of Illusion!

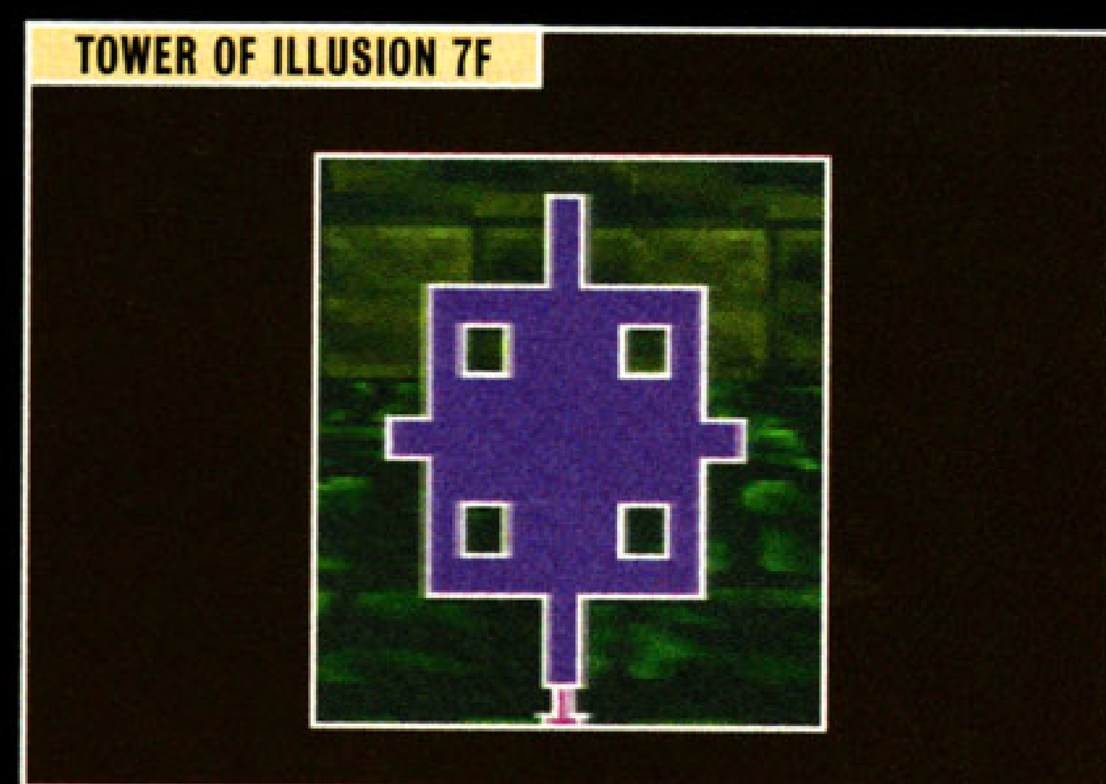












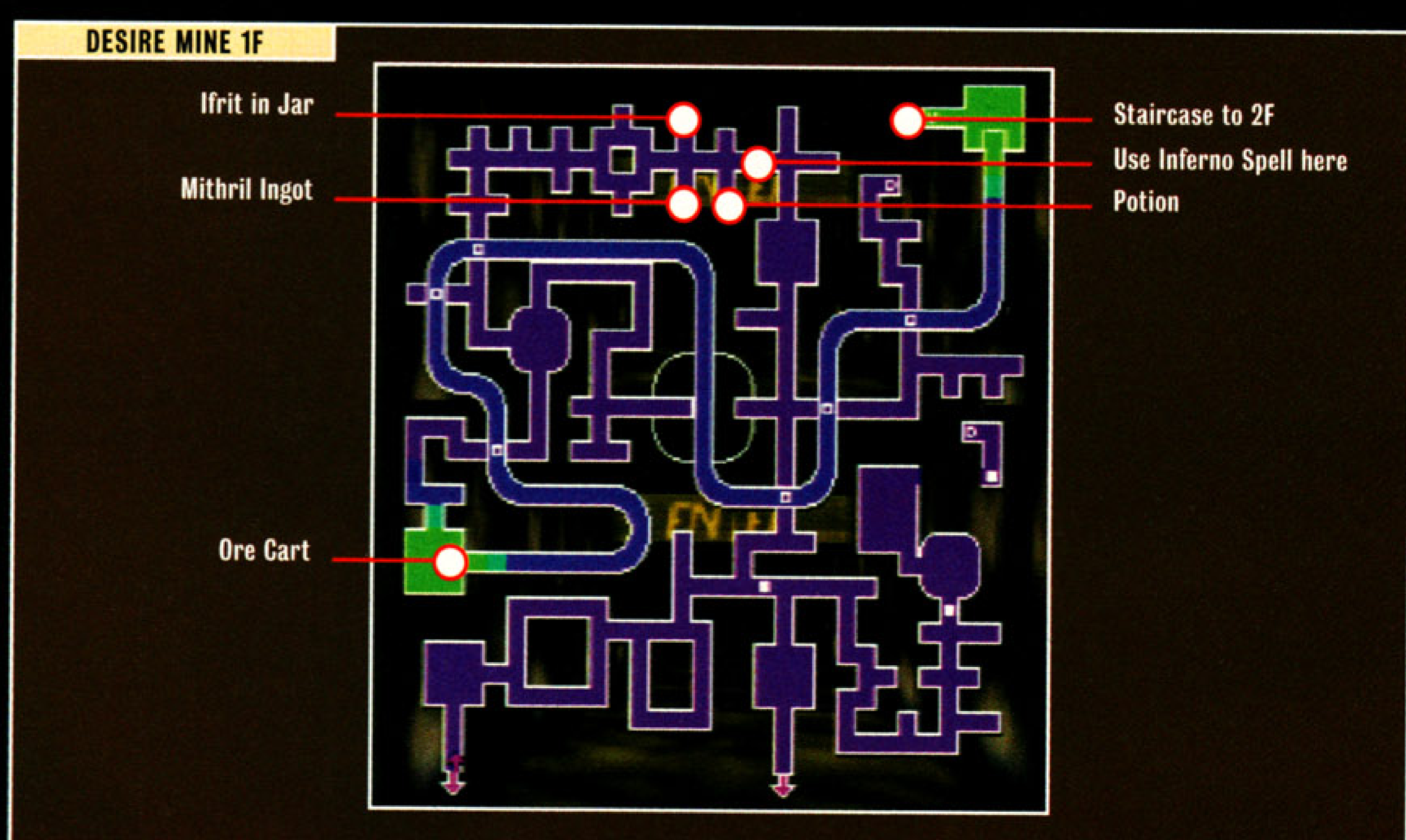
RETURN TO DESIRE MINE

The end of Shining the Holy Ark brings you back to where the game began - Desire Mine. The blockage on at the end of the passage (from the left entrance) has been moved and a mystic path blocks the way. This can be opened with your main character's new inferno magic.

As well as being mercilessly attacked by powerful creatures, this area of the mine is packed with powerful objects - as well as tons of Mithril Ore for you to take to Desire Village. Getting through the levels is straightforward. Just remember that if there is another passage leading from a chamber with an ore cart, go >>



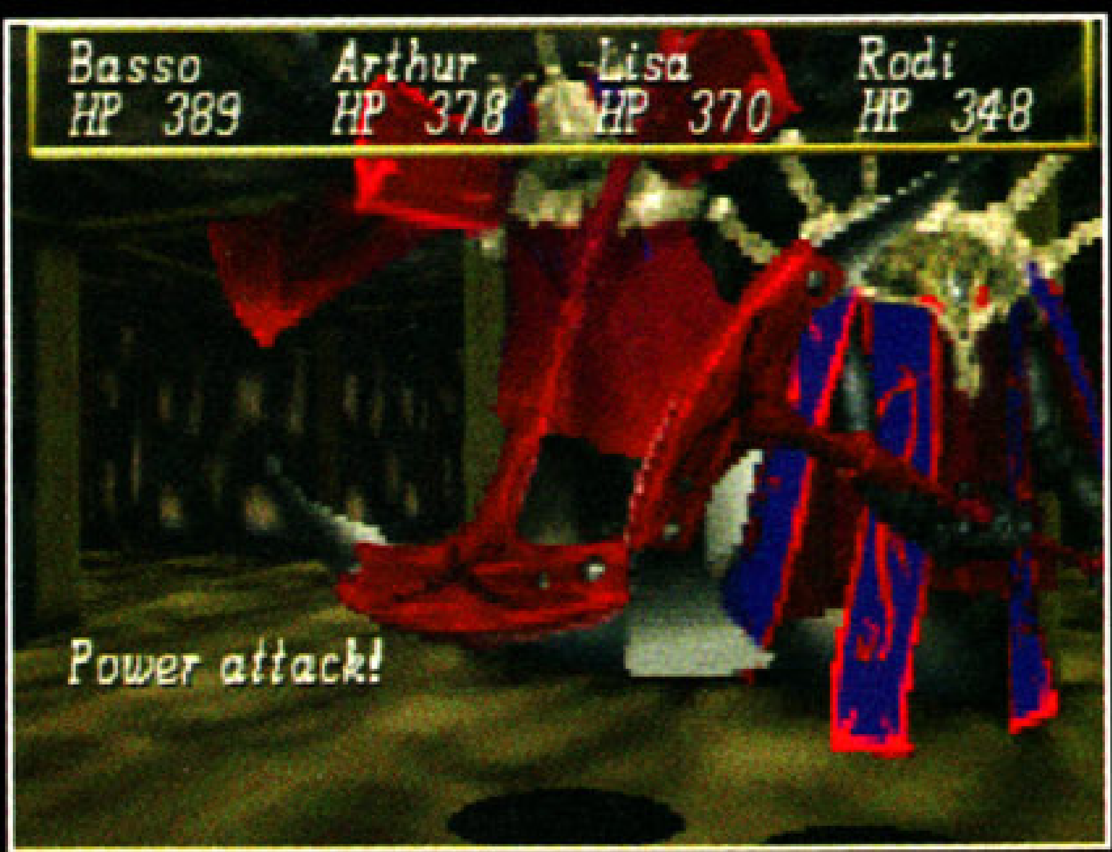


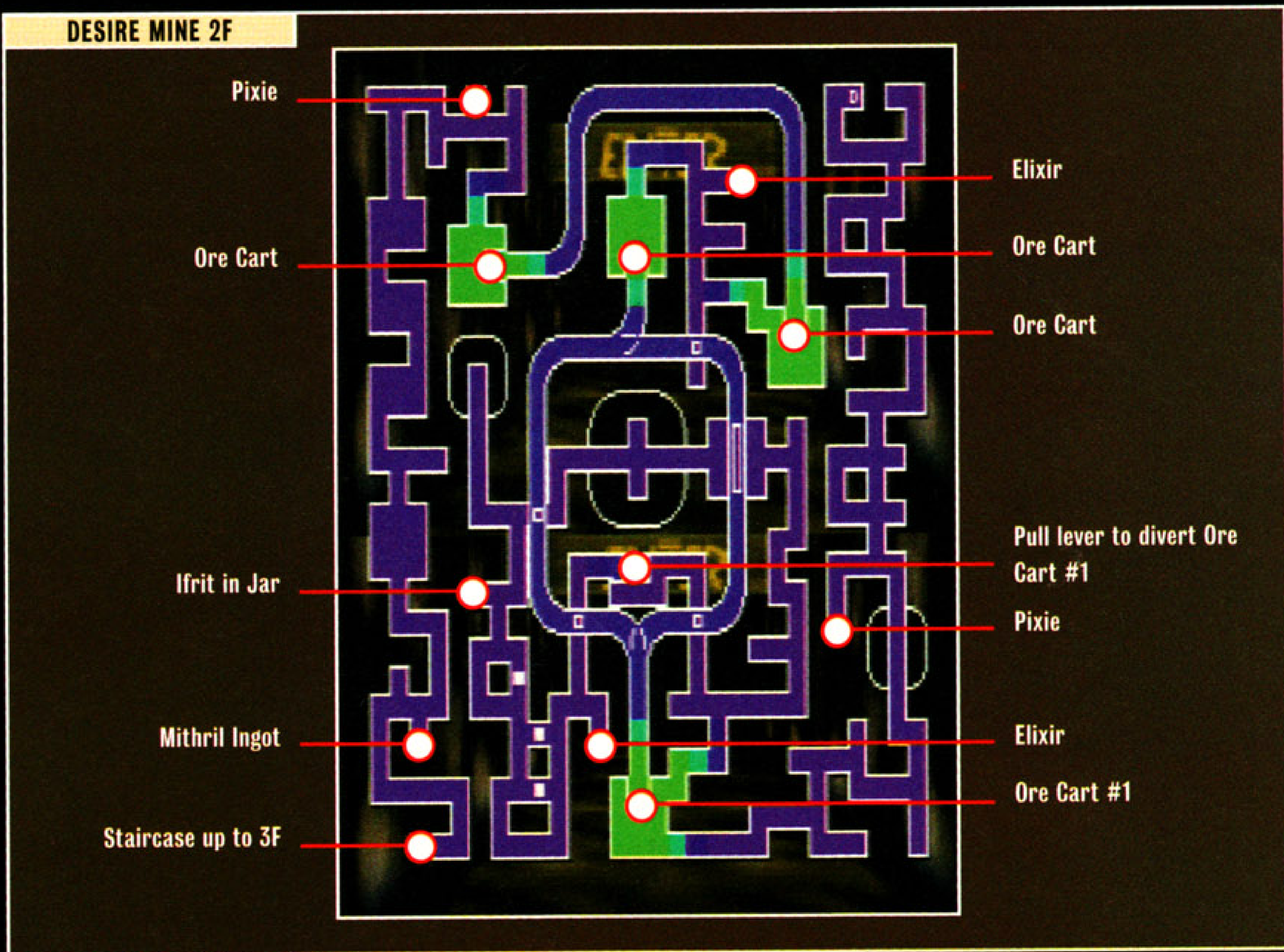


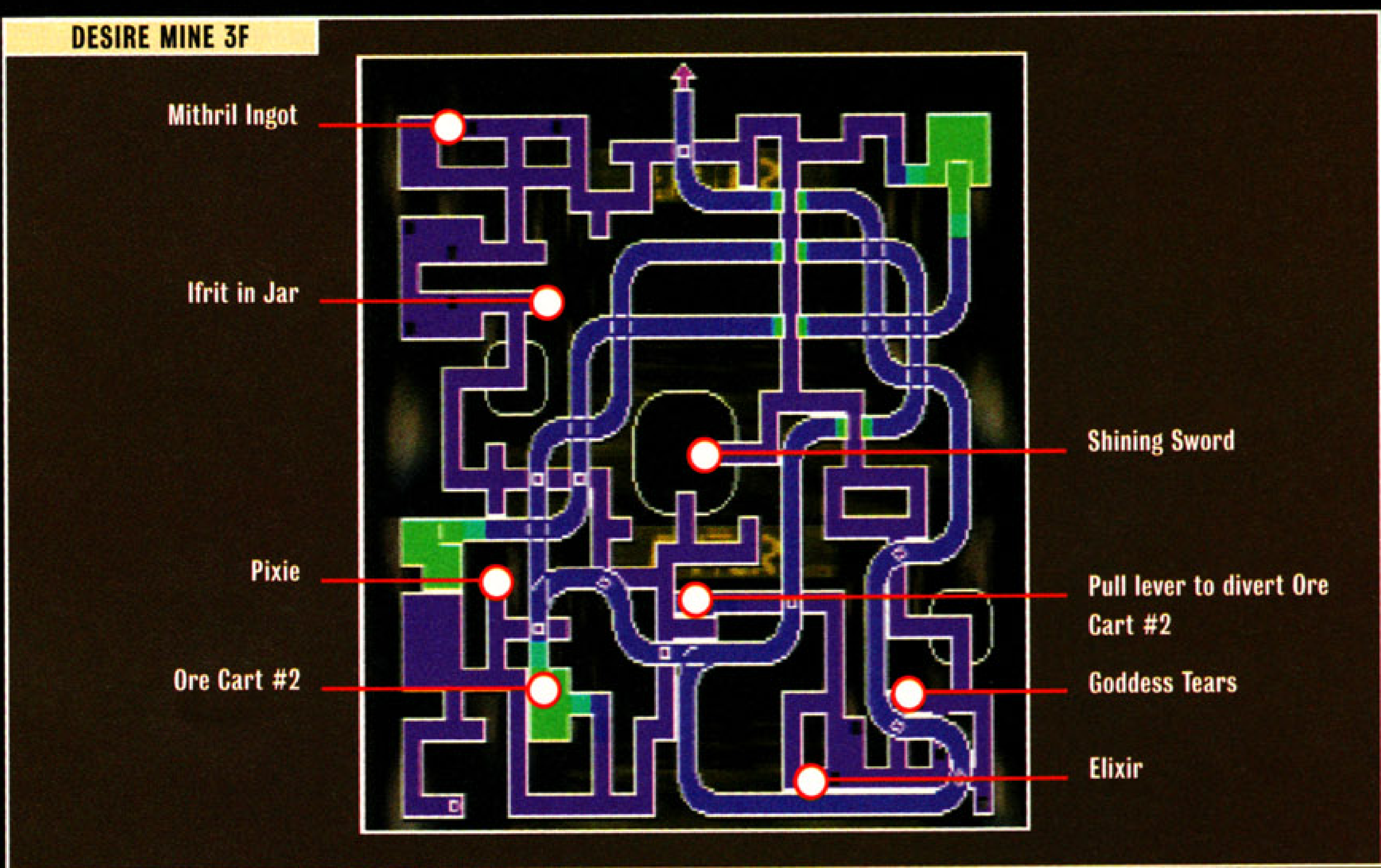
>> down it and pull the lever you'll definitely find down there before returning and using the cart. Otherwise the cart just goes around in circles.

On Desire Mine 3F you'll find the Shining Sword - the most powerful weapon in the game. Only your main character can use it, so give the Force Blade to Lisa - now you have an incredibly powerful attacking force!

Once you reach Godspeak, loot the rooms for objects, return to Desire Mine 3F, use return magic and go back to Desire Village to rest and get your new mithril equipment. And then you're ready to return for the final battle!











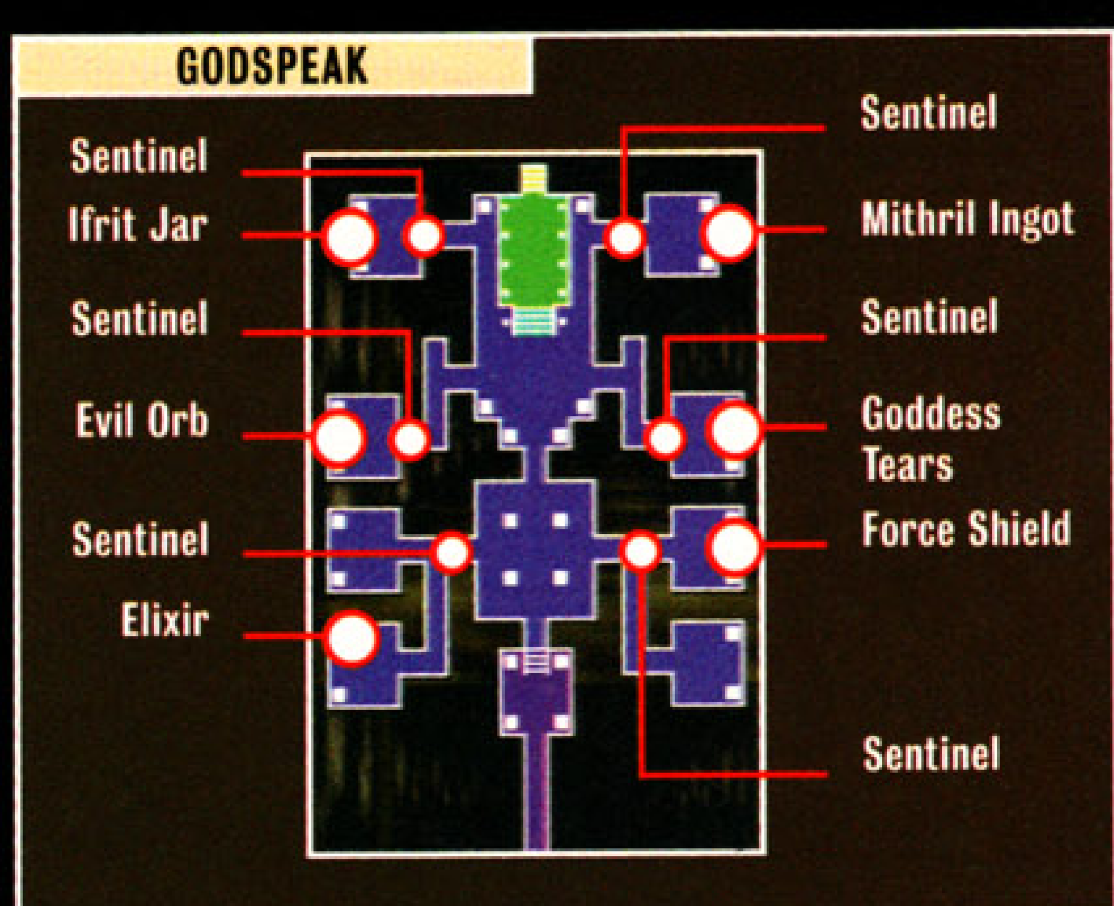
Two of the Ore Carts on the Desire Mine level need to have levers pulled in order to get 'em on the right tracks.



THE FINAL BATTLE

Actually there are two battles at the end of the game. First of all you face Rilix the witch and two evil vampires. Check out our battle tactics, but this is a classic situation where your put your magic users into battle. I favour a Main Character, Melody, Forte and Akane line-up here. The former three characters should use Spark, Elemental and Spark magic respectively, with Akane using Praying magic to top up everyone's energy every round. Keep some Goddess Years on Akane (three sets should do it). Melody and your main character have Raise the Dead magic in case you're caught out, but with Akane's Praying you shouldn't have any worries.

You might be tempted to use Attack/ Ferocity magic on your characters to up your damage. This is a waste of time: Rilix's exploding crystal ball negates all such spells.







THE FINAL BATTLE #2

Panzer merges with a fraction of evil from the Holy Ark, becoming immensely powerful and accompanied by two bodies of evil!

Once again, stick the Akane in your group. Although weak, her Praying magic comes at just the right time to save your bacon every round.

As for what battle tactics you want, it's a bit tricky. The Evil Bodies and Panzer seem to share stamina. So either bring on your physical battlers (main character, Basso and Lisa) with Akane and let rip, or stick to the configuration you used to defeat Rilix. Just make sure you have someone to restore full energy every round.

Typically, we'd recommend sticking to magical battlers to begin with. Don't worry too much if they die, switch in the likes of Basso and Lisa and then concentrate all firepower on Panzer ONLY! Hit him and you hurt all three opponents!

SHINING BATTLES!

Shining the Holy Ark has a pretty intricate battle system. On these pages we're passing on our techniques on getting the best out of each of the characters you get to control in the game, along with some cunning tactics!

MAIN CHARACTER

Named by you at the beginning of the game (although his name's Arthur if you leave it blank), this guy is your main character. He MUST be in your group of four and cannot be switched out. Because he's possessed by a spirit although he can be defeated, if you still prevail in battle, you'll find him still alive.

A swordsman by craft, this character is definitely the most powerful in the game when it comes to physical attacks, and also gets to use the best weapons! He's not fussy when it comes to armour either. Although he favours swordplay, you can get some mileage out of his Spark spell, the best for of offensive magic he has (until you get the Inferno spell at the end of the game!).

Additionally this guy is very fast, attacking first or just after the ninjas in your team.

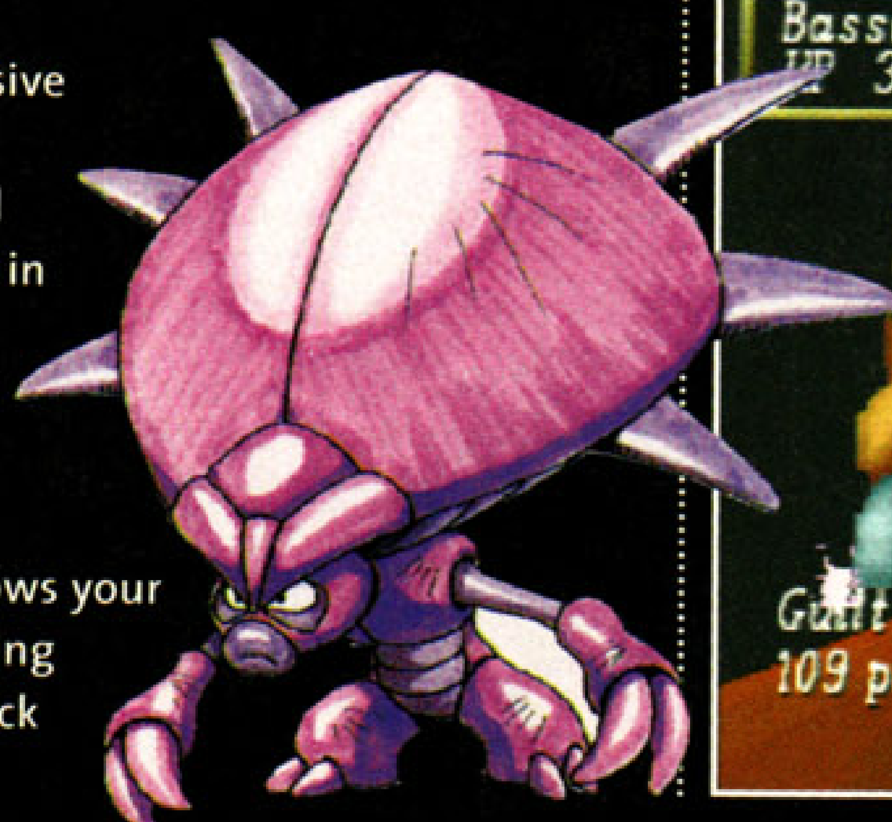


MAGIC

HEAL
Fairly straightforward. Can be used at any time to restore health to any party member.

SPARK
Lightning-style offensive spell. Very powerful indeed and after level one, it hits all targets in front of you.

SLOW
The opposite of the Support spell. This slows your enemies down, allowing the good guys to attack first each round.





In the early stages of the game, Rodi's Brutal Fire magic is the best offensive spell you have.

RAISE
This magic allows you resurrect any party member from death at any time (even in battle). Expensive, but very useful.

RETURN
This simply takes you to the beginning of the current dungeon you're in (that is, where you entered it).

SUPPRESS
Probably the most useless spell this guy has. Although it's supposed to stop monsters attacking it very rarely does.

ATTACK
Drastically boosts the attack value of the chosen target. Can be used up to four times on the same target!

INFERNO
A hugely expensive magic that inflicts around 300 damage on all foes in front of you. Given at the end of Tower of Illusion.

MELODY

The mage in the group, Melody is initially one of the most important members as she starts off being the only character who has healing magic. In the early stages of the game, her physical battling is just as important as her spell slinging, but this is out of necessity really. Once new members are added, Melody becomes pretty useless until the closing stages of the game. Like the main character, she resurrects herself after dying in battle (as long as your team is victorious).

When it comes to attack, Melody really becomes good when confronting multiple meanies. Her Hell Blast magic (level two upwards) and Elemental spells attack all enemies at once, which is cool when facing up to three attacks (plus monsters than can reproduce).

In terms of speed, Melody's pretty fast, especially when casting healing magic.



HEAL
The exact same spell as your main character - the difference is that Melody's more advanced at this form of magic.

ANTIDOTE
Some monsters are able to poison you. Melody can cure all poisons (which otherwise drain damage every round).



ELEMENTAL
Four different versions, based on each element. The most powerful attack Melody has at her disposal.

AURA
Extremely useful in that it adds to the health of everyone in the party. Expensive, but utterly essential.

HELL BLAST
Winds batter the opponent with this magic. Yes, it's good early on, but later it's just not powerful enough to hurt a gnat.

SUPPORT
A crucial spell. This adds to your speed, allowing your characters to attack before the enemy does every round.

RAISE
Melody is the first character to learn the Raise the Dead magic, which saves a ton of cash (you don't need the priest now).

RESTORE
An intriguing spell that allows one (on level one) or all of your party (on level two) to regain hit points every round.

RODI

Sharing the same immortal qualities as your main character and Melody, Rodi's ninja powers make him one of the most versatile members of your party. Above average at physical battle, and armed with one of the most useful spell line-ups in the game, Rodi is extremely useful. The fact that he virtually always attacks first every round in combat (due to his amazing speed) is also really useful.

One worrying aspect of Rodi is his susceptibility to damage. He needs more looking after than the warriors in the band, and is seemingly the first target for the more intelligent meanies.

Essential in physical battling as well as magi-



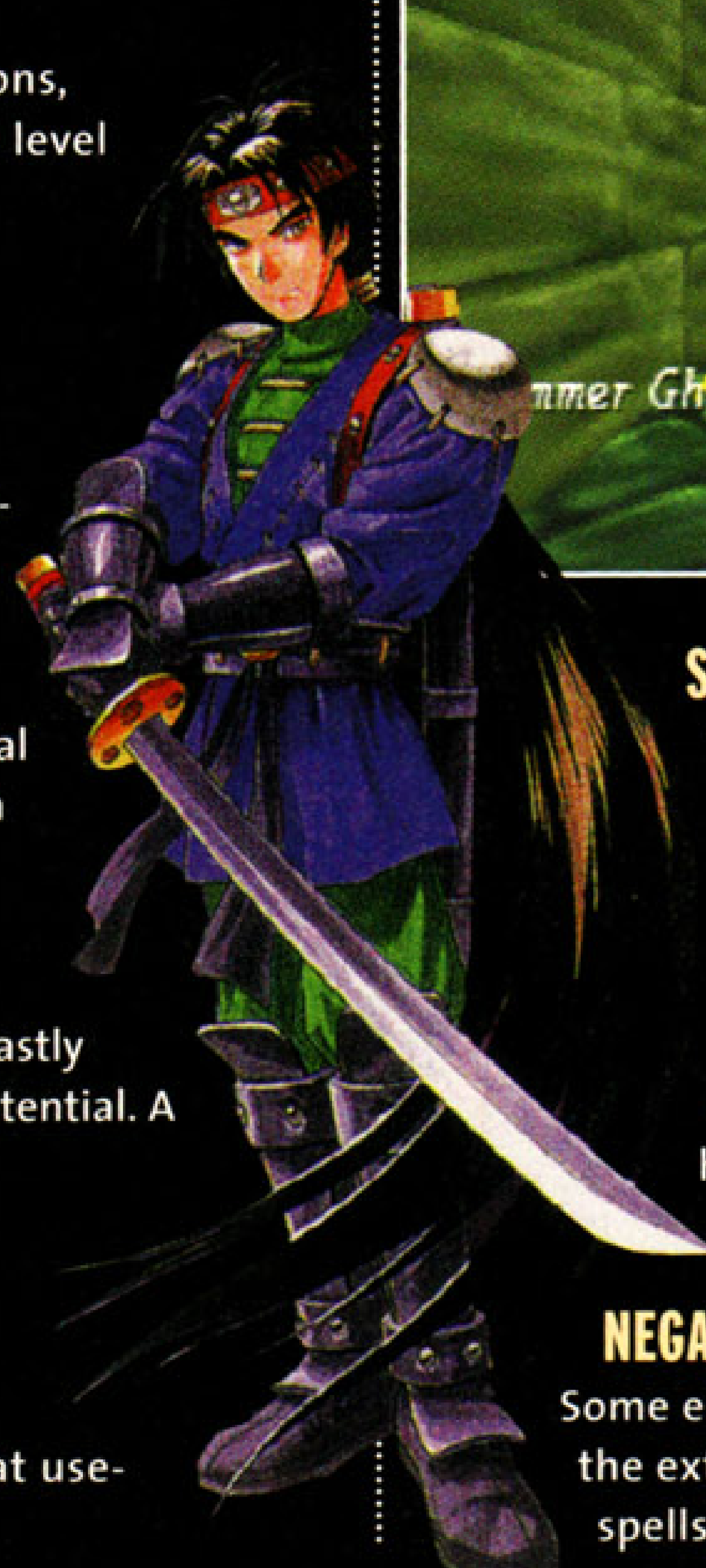


Rodi becomes both an essential physical as well as magical fighter in the later stages of the game.



cal team line-ups, Rodi is a must for your team from start to finish!





BRUTAL FIRE
One of Rodi's initial magical weapons, this really comes into its own from level two onwards, where it hits multiple foes.

AYAKASHI
Being a ninja involves confusing the opposition. This spell lessens the likelihood of an opponent hitting.

LIGHTNING
This is the later replacement for Brutal Fire. Excessively powerful, but costs a lot of magic to cast.

FEROCITY
The ninja equivalent of Attack, this vastly adds to the chosen target's attack potential. A brilliant spell.

ILLUSION
Another spell designed to confound the enemies by making them attack thin air! Not really that useful really.

SPIDER-THREAD
The ninja speed is all important. This spell makes the opponent even slower, guaranteeing that you attack first.

MADNESS
Yet another confusion-based spell, designed to stop enemies hitting home. Not really worth bothering with at all.

NEGATE
Some enemies have a tendency to pile on the extra speed and extra attacking power spells. This destroys all magical effects.

BASSO

This proud dragon warrior is the first additional member of your Shining Force to join up. A warrior through and through, Basso concentrates on power and technique in order to bludgeon his foes to death.

This does, however, have a certain amount of disadvantages. Most notably, he's the only character you control who has no magic whatsoever. This is certainly something of a pain in the arse. Additionally, he's excessively slow. You'll have trouble finding any creature in the game who has less speed than Basso, meaning that he's always last to attack per attack round. Basso also uses axes only as weaponry, meaning that you have to hunt around a bit more for decent tools for him to use.

When he first joins, he is the definite heavy hitter of the team but once the main character and Lisa get the serious swords in their possession, Basso's role is down-played.

- NO MAGIC WHATSOEVER -





LISA

Basso's partner in crime doesn't get added to your team until you're about half-way into the adventure, when tackling the West Shrine. As a general description, you'll find that Lisa is basically the female equivalent of your main character - adept at swordplay, albeit graced with a different (and probably more useful) range of spells. As the game progresses, Lisa's attributes develop so that she becomes even more powerful than Basso. Kit her out with the right sword and armour and you won't go wrong.

In terms of speed, Lisa is quite slow - just a tad faster than Basso in fact, so you're pretty much guaranteed that in a combat situation, your main character and the ninjas in your team will attack first, then the enemy, then Lisa and then Basso. Learning these timings is essential in getting the best possible outcome from a fight.

HEAL
As well as being a fighter, Lisa's a healer too - and a more adept one than your main character. Very useful.

RETURN
Just like the main character, Lisa can spirit you out of a dungeon whenever you want - except when in a fight.

BARRIER
Designed to lessen the impact of enemy breath damage (hot air, scorching fire and what-have-you). Not really that useful.

AURA
Heals everyone in the team simultaneously. The fact that this typically comes into effect after an enemy attacks is worth remembering.

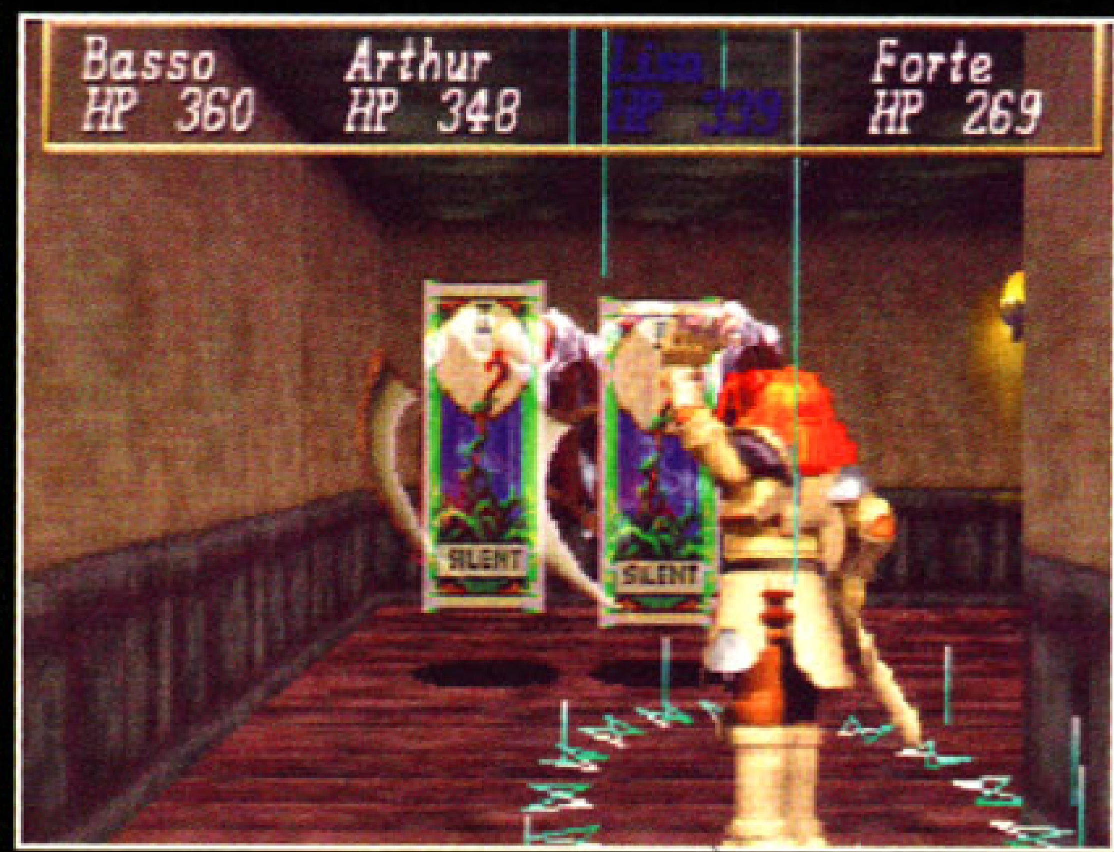
ANTIDOTE
Since Melody has this too, you can cover any poisonous attacks in either a magical or physical battle configuration.





Lisa's an excellent healer and potent sword-slinger!





SUPPORT
To make your team attack first, cast a couple of these. It improves speed and means you get your damage in quickly.

ANTI-SPELL
This spell is designed to stop your enemies casting magic, which sounds great. Unfortunately, we could rarely get it working.

SHIELD
Basically the magical equivalent of the Barrier spell. It does keep enemy damage down, but it's not really worth sacrificing a turn.

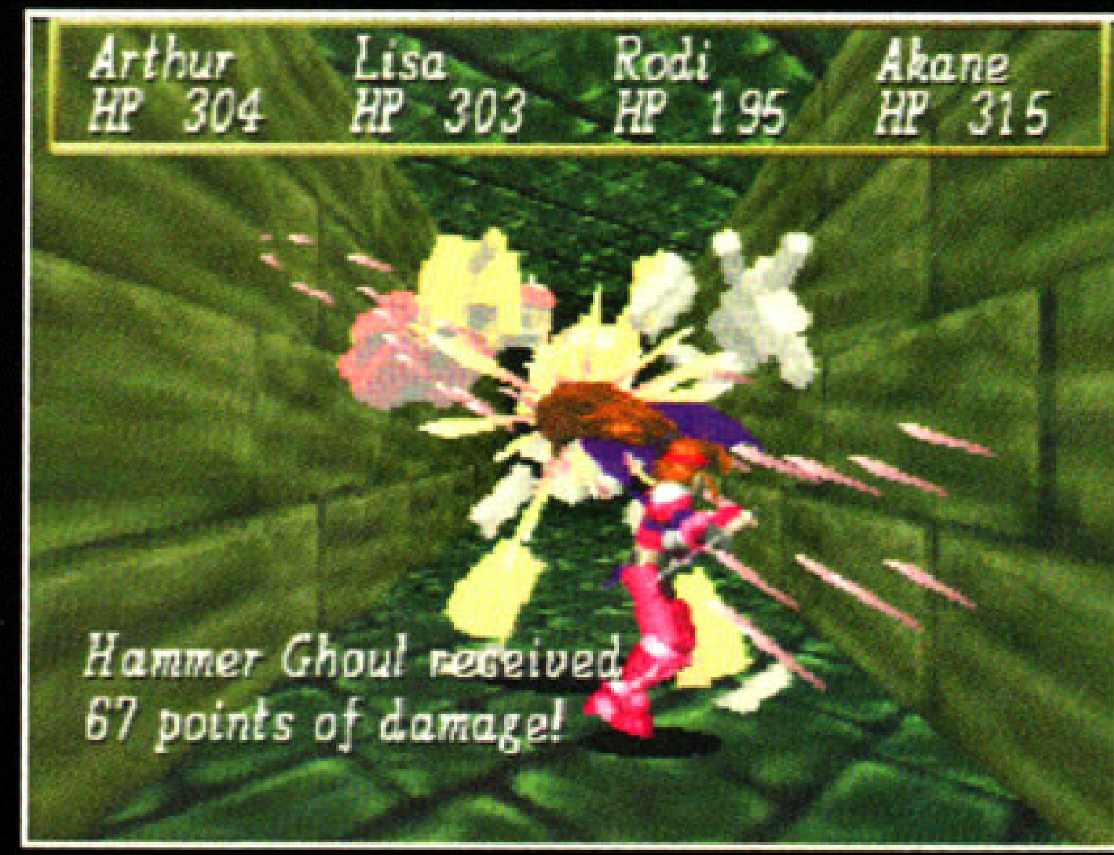
AKANE

This ninja joins the team at Far East Village, after the Sacred Sword has been collected from the South Shrine. Akane is a very different ninja to Rodi. Whilst Rodi's attributes favour physical as well as magical battling, Akane is more suited to healing (she's the first character to get a spell to heal everyone at once) and generally supporting the team in ways other than attack.

When it comes to attacking, Akane is poor to average, even later on in the game when kitted out with top-notch equipment.



Akane is probably your best all-round healer once she joins.





Akane shares Rodi's ninja-like speed (in fact she always attacks before him), meaning that if your team is near death, you can switch her in and get her to heal everyone knowing that she'll revive them before the enemy can attack. Useful.

HEAL
Akane's well versed in the healing arts. She progresses through the levels at around the same pace as Melody.

ANTIDOTE
Continuing Akane's profile as a healer, the Antidote spell (at level two) can purge any poison in the entire game.

GOD'S WIND
Akane's support role in the team allows her to reduce enemy breath damage with this spell. Not really worth the bother though.

SWIFT WIND
The Support spell in all but name, this boosts the speed and defense of your characters. Useful against the faster creatures.

WEASEL SLASH
Akane's multiple attack spell zeroes in all foes. Pretty much like Hell Blast to be honest and quite weak.

PRAYING
The first character to heal everyone at once, this is really where Akane comes into her own. Extremely useful!

SPIRITUAL
This is the equivalent of the enemy Soul Steal spell, designed to kill immediately. Unfortunately it rarely works.

REVIVAL
Consolidating Akane's healing credentials is her version of the Raise the Dead spell. Again, useful in a tight spot.

FORTE

Forte joins the band soon after Akane - the Sacred Sword forces out the evil spirits from both the wizard and the king and he agrees to join the quest. Forte is a very aggressive magic user, with just about every spell in his repertoire being used in an attacking situation. He's also fairly fast as well, pretty much guaranteed to get his attack in soon after the ninjas in your band have had their say. Although familiar, his spells are typically more powerful than the equivalents other band members might have - (the Spark spell in particular). Also, spells like Soul Steal, which hardly every work with other team members are far more likely to work with Forte.

His only real disadvantage is the fact that he's so prone to damage - hits with the others easily absorb take far more out of this character, so he does need special looking after.



BLAZE

A low-cost, mid-power attacking solution. Does respectable damage, but you're far more likely to go for the Spark spell.

SHIELD

Since you get levels of power with this spell, all of your team are protected from magical attacks. Fairly useful.

ANTI-SPELL

Stops foes from attacking. About 50% likely to work, and very useful if it does. Don't even attempt it on bosses though!

SLEEP

Sends your foes to sleep, leaving you open to kill them. Good eh? Well it would be if it worked regularly, which it doesn't.









SOUL STEAL

Designed to take enemies out immediately, in its level two incarnation it actually works half the time!

FREEZE

The spell that the enemy seem to chuck at you all the time. A useful attack, but just stick to Spark for more damage.

SPARK

Forte's best attacking spell comes at a price, but it really can't be beaten (and it has a cool special animation).

ATTACK

Drastically boosts a team member's attacking prowess - whoever has the Shining Sword or Force Blade should receive this spell!

GENERAL BATTLING

Here are some tips to get the most out of Shining's excellent battle system.

1. Don't rely on AUTO fighting - you get far more enjoyment (and practise for the difficult fights) doing all of the work for yourself.
2. In the beginning stages, don't rely on magic until it reaches level two status (where it attacks multiple targets). Save Melody's magic points for healing.
3. Stock up on herbs every time you visit a town (later on, go for potions). Try to have at least five per head.
4. On the later stages where you have more than four characters, divide your team into magic and physical fighters. Use magical characters where you have more than two opponents, stick to physical for single or dual opponents.
5. KNOW YOUR TIMINGS! Your characters typically attack at certain times per round. Knowing when a character get its turn will help you decide what they should do.
6. The best spell is undoubtedly Attack/Ferocity. Use this to beef up Basso and your main character. Later on, give Lisa the Force Blade and get Rodi to use the spell on her.
7. Switch in Forte and use him, your main character and Rodi to simultaneously use the Attack spell on either your main character or Lisa. A character can have the Attack spell cast on them four times (typically). With the Shining Sword you can hit for 850 damage!
8. Learn who has the Aura/Praying spell (Akane, Lisa and Melody actually) and switch them in on tough fights. Akane definitely goes first in a combat turn, followed by Melody (some monsters may be quicker) and finally Lisa who seemingly always goes last (except against some really tough monsters).
9. Some monsters require you to switch between your physical and magical attack profile. For example, on the crabs, use magic to kill off their pincers then switch to physical battlers to finish off the body.
10. Make FULL USE of the 3333 experience creature to boost your characters' levels (see last issue's guide). You need a level 23-25 main character to defeat the final guardian!







COIN-OPERATED

It's been a busy month for the Japanese coin-op industry, with not one but three arcade shows taking place. Our Man in the East, Warren Harrod, made full use of his young person's travel card to give SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE the full lowdown.

SNK

SAMURAI SPIRITS 64

BY	SNK
BOARD	HYPER NEOGEO 64
TYPE	BEAT 'EM UP
COMPLETE	40%





On Tuesday 1st July, SNK invited SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE to take a look at their brand new hardware board, the Hyper NeoGeo 64, and some of the great new games they are developing for it. In the beautiful city of Osaka, the home of SNK, we were privileged to have the first play of Samurai Spirits 64 at a special arcade preview show. Having seen videos of the game running on their new 3D hardware at both the AOU Show and the Tokyo Game Show, excitement was at fever pitch as we gathered to play one of the most eagerly awaited beat 'em ups of the year.



Samurai Spirits 64 is a stunning 3D sword fighting game that uses a four button system (guard, weak attack, strong attack, dash) for some of the smoothest arcade combat ever seen! The game currently has 11 selectable characters plus one mid-boss and one end boss. Battles take place on a number of varied stages but, unlike previous 3D fighting games, SS64 gives players much more opportunity to move around the stage, allowing complete 360 degree freedom of movement. Besides established Samurai Spirits features, the game also includes the debut of a number of new special features.

ANGER GAUGE

As you take damage from your opponent your Anger Gauge gradually begins to fill up. When the gauge is full your character is then in a special state of ANGER! When this happens, several things occur: Your attack strength increases, the power of your special attacks increases (multiple hits are now possible) and certain characters become capable of using secret fighting arts. Also, by pressing the A, B and C buttons together, players may perform a special attack called the "Anger Explosion."

SAMURAI DRIVE SYSTEM

In many fighting games these days the combo systems have become difficult to master. Only expert players are able to continue a really long combo so beginners are at a real disadvantage. However, in SS64 this system has been improved to make it simpler. During a combo, no matter which combination of stick/button you select, you'll still be able to pull off a complete combo.

FREE DASH

Possibly the most impressive feature of Samurai Shodown 64, the Free Dash is the perfect showcase for the Hyper NeoGeo's ability to move polygons at a frightening pace. Press the D button and your character is capable of dashing in any direction you require. By running around the stage, you can employ various tactics to turn the battle to your advantage. This feature requires the Stamina gauge.

STAMINA GAUGE

This is a new gauge that appears at the bottom of the screen and shows the amount of stamina remaining for each character. Every time you dash or dodge an attack the stamina gauge goes down. When it reaches zero you are no longer capable of dashing or dodging. It may be recharged by pressing down the guard button.

FIELD SHIFT

During a battle, there are various conditions around the stage that allow you to shift the location of the battle to a different field. For example, a powerful attack could push your opponent right through a wooden wall and send them tumbling into the next room where the battle would continue.





SNK's Hyper NeoGeo team gets to grips with the stunning Samurai Showdown 64, truly a 3D beat 'em up extravaganza!





Samurai Spirits 64 is currently 40% complete with four playable characters (Haohmaru, Nakoruru, Galford and Ukyo) and three basic stages. Each character had about six attacks available, but there were no special attacks included as yet. The Free Dash system and Stamina Gauge were working but the Anger Gauge wasn't accessible. Presently only the main stage area was available, although the Field Shift feature was missing. Despite these omissions, SNK's beat 'em up was simply stunning. No matter where you run, or the position of of the two combatants, the game always rotates, zooms and pans around the entire stage using a mixture of beautiful 2D backgrounds and 3D foregrounds.

The fighting is very dramatic, with realistic sound effects when swords strike each other and sparks flying off in all directions. In addition, little touches like different sized spurts of blood depending on the strength of your attack, add a further element of excitement. Compared to other typical 3D fighting games, the ability to leap right over your opponent or sprint right around them (either in front or behind), has a refreshing sensation of over-the-top action. Indeed, when both characters are running away from each other, and the camera is panning out (very smoothly), it's great fun to be able to enjoy such freedom of movement.

Having used motion capture for all the character's motions it's easy to see how SNK have been able to make the character's look so realistic. When fighters block an attack, they don't simply hold their sword as if they were going to make a counter attack. Instead, they use their other hand to support the sword against the oncoming blow. Depending on the character the effect is different. For instance, Nakoruru puts her other arm behind her knife, Ukyo half draws his sword out, leaving the tip in the sheaf and Galford holds the top of his sword with his other hand.

The game's characters also move and react very naturally. When they're not fighting they stand in a ready pose, swaying slightly from side to side. As they move around, their weapons are usually in their sheaths, but as you attack they quickly draw their swords out. When they run they carefully hold their weapons at their side. Each of the characters has a definite personality which makes it easy to enjoy playing with every fighter. SNK have also been able to convert everyone's favourite character from 2D sprite to texture-mapped polygon figure without losing their natural charisma.





HYPER NEOGEO 64™

SNK's new arcade hardware board is called the Hyper NeoGeo 64. As the successor to the very successful NeoGeo board, SNK have not only incorporated the latest in 3D capabilities into the board, but have also included enhanced 2D capabilities as well. In fact this is the first time that any company has created a hardware system with both advanced 3D and 2D technology. While the 3D features allow unprecedented realistic 3D CG to be displayed, the 2D features permit incredibly smooth animation. Having the best of both worlds on one board will not only have amazing cost performance benefits, but will also enable SNK to combine sprites and polygons together to create unparalleled games.

The Hyper NeoGeo 64 uses a ROM cart to hold the software, making it both practical and easy to update. SNK's new hardware runs at 60 frames per second which allows it to create unbelievably realistic graphics. In addition, the Hyper NeoGeo 64 features a fantastic new sound system to compliment the excellent visuals. Without a doubt, SNK's Hyper NeoGeo 64 will be capable of creating a brand new virtual gaming world which we'll be able to enjoy at arcades very shortly.

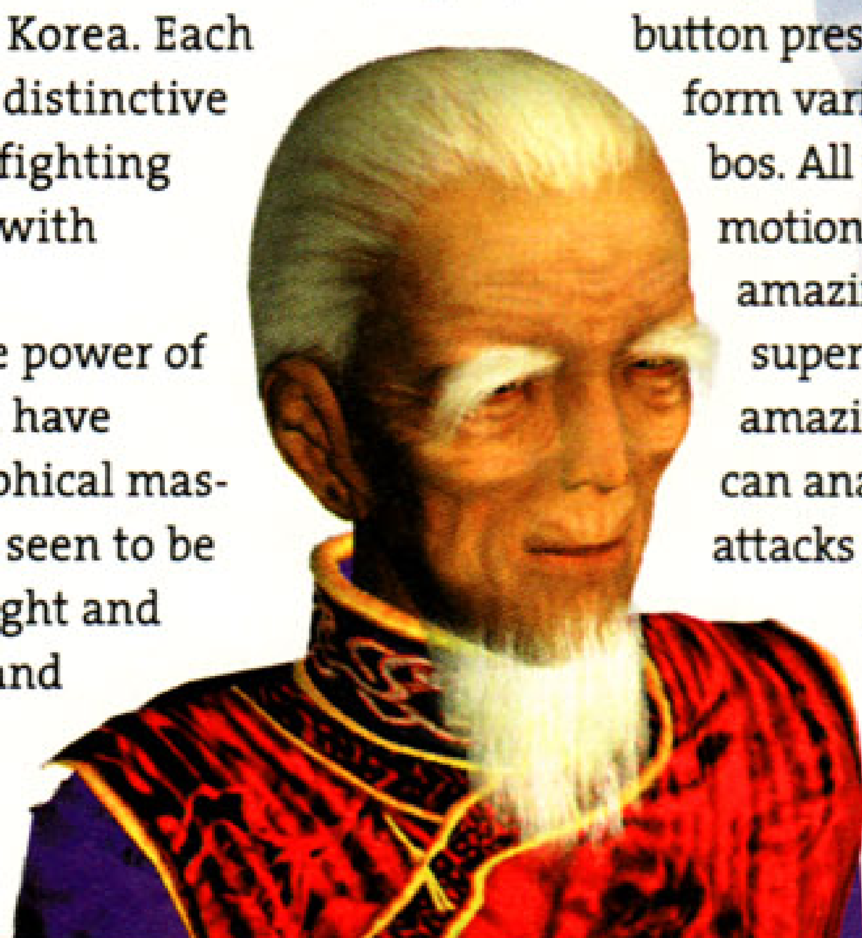
KONAMI

FIGHTING WU-SHU

BY	KONAMI
BOARD	COBRA
TYPE	BEAT 'EM UP
COMPLETE	60%

On Tuesday 17th June, Konami unveiled its fantastic summer line-up of great arcade games at one of Tokyo's most majestic locations, The Imperial Hotel. All of Japan's top gaming journalists were invited to this special press show and nobody was disappointed with what Konami had to offer.

The main event of the show was the final unveiling of Konami's mega 3D beat 'em up, Fighting Wu-Shu. Previously known by the code name "PF573", this is Konami's first title to appear on their incredible "Cobra" board. With a clearly oriental theme, Fighting Wu-Shu uses some of Asia's greatest martial artists from China, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea. Each character has their own distinctive personality and unique fighting style that is reproduced with unbelievable realism.



Using the incredible power of the Cobra board, Konami have managed to create a graphical masterpiece that needs to be seen to be believed. As characters fight and move, their clothes fold and move as well, those long hair waves from side to side and waist sashes



swish around with silky smoothness.

Not only are the characters incredibly detailed, so are the stages. Each fighting arena is constructed entirely from polygons so it's possible to view the stage from every angle. As character battle, and move around, the entire stage rotates giving you the opportunity to see all the great surrounding scenery. Never before has a 3D stage looked so realistic.

By using a combination of stick movements and button presses each character has the ability to perform various special fighting techniques and combos. All the characters movements have been motion captured, using top martial artists for amazing realism, and of course all the action is super smooth. Fighting Wu-Shu also has an amazing AI system where the CPU characters can analyse your fighting style and change their attacks accordingly. So, if you continue to keep using the same attack strategy, the CPU character will realise this and both vary its defensive tactics to best block your attacks and also choose the best counter techniques against your attacks.



As you can see from the quality of these screenshots, Fighting Wu-Shu looks set to be a real coin-op guzzler.



For novice players, there is a special Beginner Mode where, with just one button, you can do various complex martial art techniques. By selecting this mode, the aforementioned AI is used to study your previous match's combo techniques and re-use them again. With these innovative systems the game is now open to a wider range of players to enjoy and yet still offers more of a challenge for those who are skilled at fighting games.

COBRA BOARD HARDWARE

Working in conjunction with IBM, Konami have developed a new high technology 3D graphics board called COBRA. The new board has been designed for use with Konami's next generation of arcade game machines. The Cobra board's first game is the incredible Fighting Wu-Shu. First demonstrated in September 1996 at the JAMMA Show, the first Cobra board game should be in amusement centres all over Japan later this year!

COBRA BOARD TECH SPECS

CPU: Power PC

POLYGON DISPLAY RATE: 1,000,000 - 5,000,000 polygons/sec

PIXEL DISPLAY RATE: 50,000,000 - 250,000,000 pixels/sec

SCREEN RESOLUTION: 640 x 400 (1280x1024 pixels)

SHADING: Sub-pixel Anti-aliasing, Flat Shading, Guroud Shading, Light Sourcing, Surrounding Light, Parallel Light Sourcing, Mapping, Perspective Mapping, Environment Mapping



With its heady mix of realistic visuals and lightning fast gameplay, Fighting Wu-Shu could be a VF3 beater!



Konami's Cobra board pumps out polygons at an amazing rate.

SEGA ENTERPRISES

THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK

BY	AM3
BOARD	MODEL 3
TYPE	LIGHT GUN SHOOTING
COMPLETE	80%









The Lost World may not have been Spielberg's finest hour, but AM3's creation is an action-packed monster massacre!



Since being released in the US, The Lost World: Jurassic Park has become a huge hit, breaking box office hits and even surpassing the success of the original film. Now Sega bring you the game of the movie! The power of the Model 3 CG board has been fully harnessed to recreate the realism and thrills of the movie with a rich and exciting game scenario which includes various movie scenes and mini-games to enhance the cinematic experience.

The game is best played on Sega's incredible Theatre Cabinet which will blow players away with it's 50" monitor and four speaker surround sound system. The woofers inside the seats recreate the feel of the earth shaking and various other effects. Players are guaranteed to experience all the action, thrills and sounds of the movie with this ground breaking 3D sound system. In addition, the cabinet is designed to filter out all external light and noise, letting players feel totally immersed in the game environment.

Players enter the world of The Lost World: Jurassic Park to save Ian Malcolm and Sarah Harding, the stars of the movie. They must shoot their way through five challenging stages of rampaging dinosaurs to rescue them and escape alive. Along the way you'll encounter a terrifying T-Rex, lumbering Brontosaurus', swooping Pteradon's and vicious Raptors. However, as a counter to the gore and violence of House of the Dead, Sega's latest arcade shooter employs tranquilliser guns with which to knock out rampaging dinos. As well as paralysing dinosaurs, there are also a number of mini-games to play. Your success or failure in these mini-games changes the way the main game develops. Players can also pick up special items that will help them advance through the game by saving lives and exploring their surroundings. When playing with a friend, a "cooperation" feature rates how well the pair of you worked together.



Raptors attack with frightening speed, using their claws and teeth to terrorise hapless players.





Unfortunately, players only shoot tranquiliser darts.



Points are awarded for speed and accuracy.

SCORE SYSTEM

Points are gained with the following system. The game's score-keeping system adds even more excitement and fun to the challenge of The Lost World: Jurassic Park.

TECHNICAL SHOTS

SNIPE SHOT: Hit the enemy's weak point.
ONE SHOT DOUBLE: Hit two or more enemies with one shot using ricochets or special items.
TRICK SHOT: Dinosaurs freeze at the sound of breaking glass. Pick them off for handy trick shot points.
QUICK SHOT: Hit a dinosaur within one second of it appearing on-screen.
LONG RANGE: Hit an enemy from a distance.
HIT: Normal shot.
ECHO SHOT: Pick up points for shooting objects like glass that break and make noise.

EVENT CLEAR BONUS
Gain points depending on how well you clear the action event scenes. Ranges from Great to Failed.

COIN BONUS
Multiple continues make it more difficult to get high scores and progress up the ranking chart.







SEGA ENTERPRISES

LE MANS 24

BY	AM3
BOARD	MODEL 3
TYPE	RACING
COMPLETE	60%





With progressively changing scenery, a free entry system and unparalleled handling, Le Mans 24 has been designed to appeal to a wide audience, from beginners to die-hard game fans. The car bodies and the race course are fully created with the high level of graphics only made possible by the power of the Model 3 CG board. Sega's know-how and the latest arcade technology combine to bring you the world of Le Mans 24 in stunning realistic detail.

Sega have made it possible for players to battle it out over the gruelling world famous 24 hour race with six of the world's top car manufácturers: Mazda Speed, Porsche, Mercedes, MacLaren, Nismo and Ferrari. The incredible realistic driving feel of these cars was made possible by the expert advice given to AM3 by professional drivers (Youjiro Terada and Naoki Hattori).



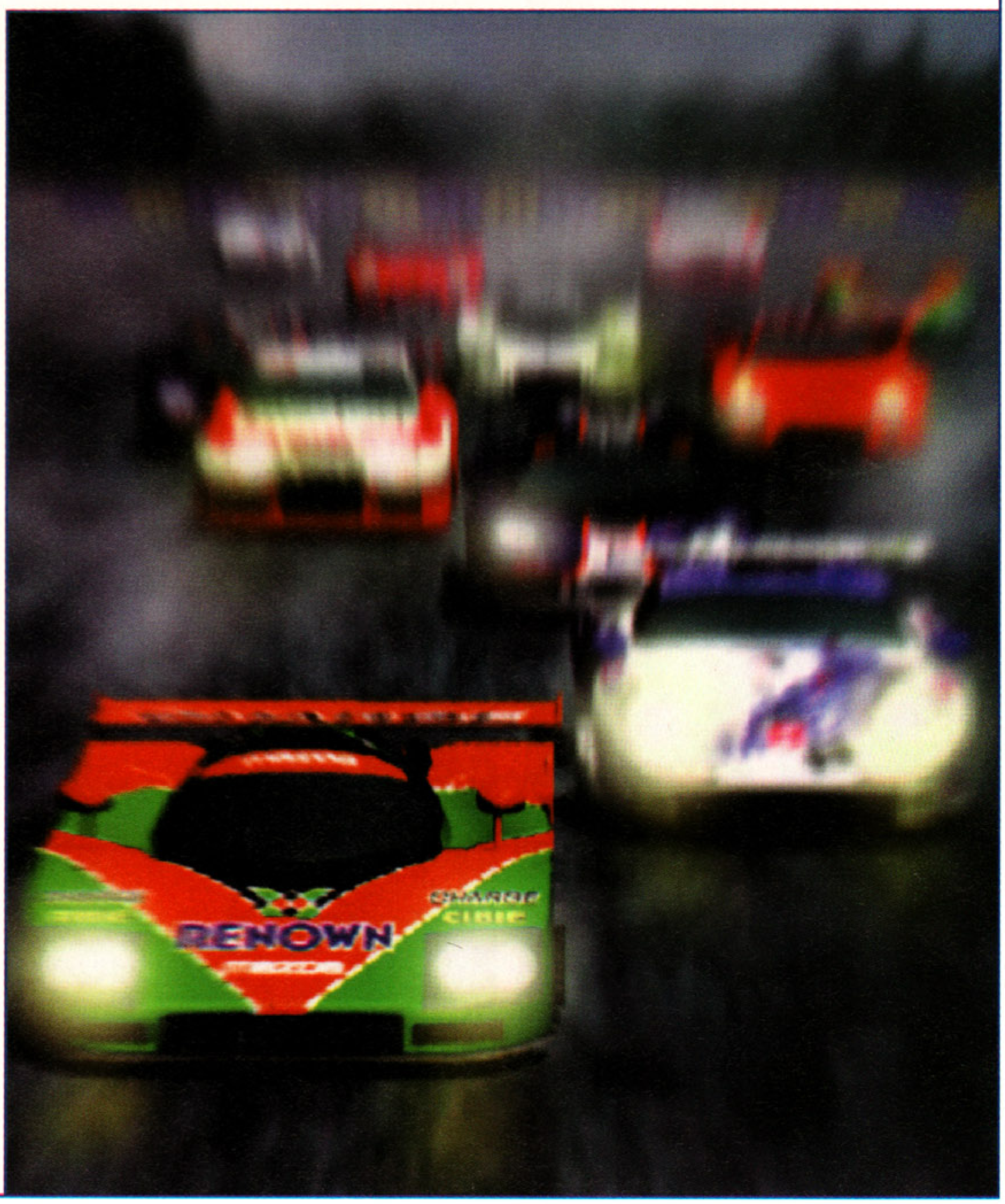
The Variable Scenery system in Le Mans 24 means that the course and race conditions are changing all the time. The road surface, weather and time of day are all changing in real time so whether you are driving on a freeway during a hot sunny day, or racing on a normal road at night in the pouring rain, you can be sure that





More Model 3 madness as Sega take to the roads once again. Le Mans 24 is a driver's dream come true.





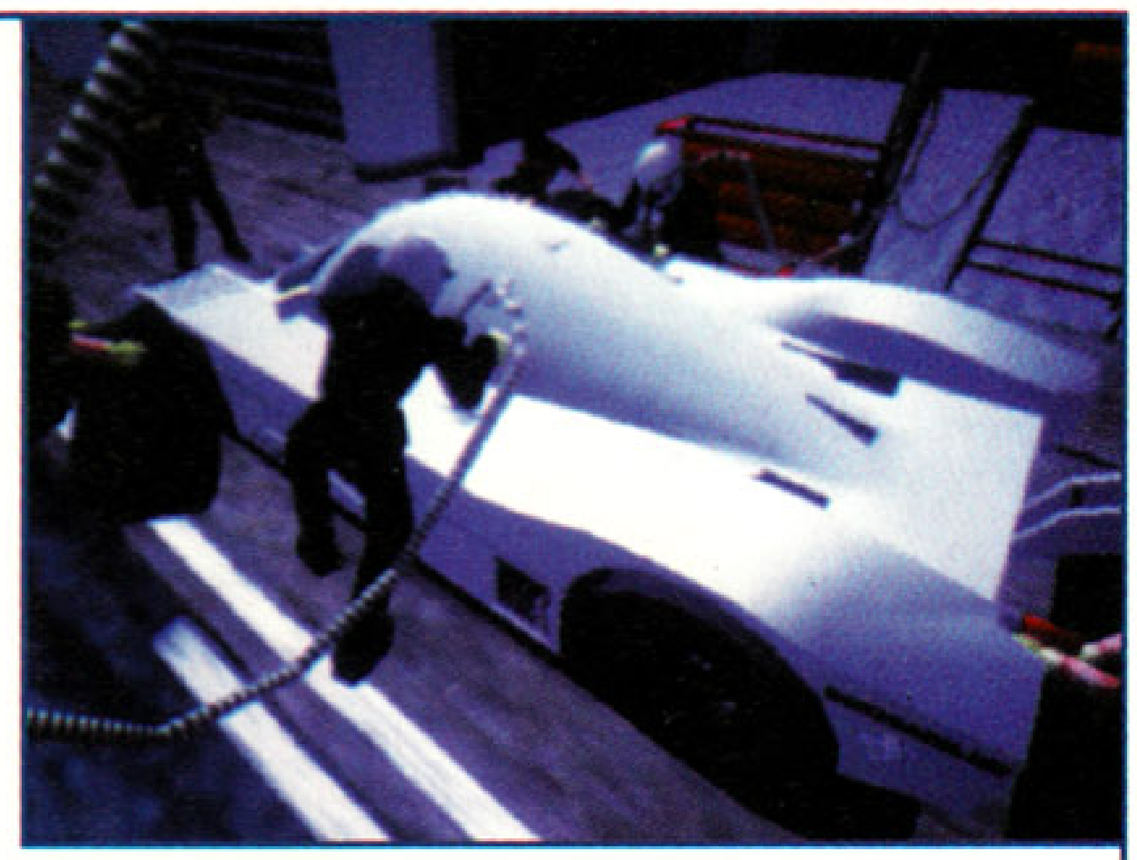


no two games are ever the same.

After selecting your car and it's transmission the game begins. Since the race continues even when no-one is playing, you are permitted to enter the race at any time. The player's 24 hour endurance race begins from the point they enter the action. You must pass each checkpoint within a set time and complete the race within 24 hours (about 10 mins). If you overtake rival cars during the race you can get extra points and extended game play time. If you complete the race you can enjoy the challenge of a special extra course. At the end of the game your rank is displayed on screen.



Note the sparks leaping out of the car's exhaust.



Le Mans 24 will blow players away with its incredible visuals.

GAME SYSTEM

Le Mans 24 has many other features to enhance the overall driving experience including a large 20" monitor for thrilling game play, the ability to switch between four different viewing angles and up to six units can be linked up together for dynamic racing battles. Add to this a special speaker system which pumps out actual race-car sounds as well as a variety of high powered BGM with a pounding beat and it's clear that Sega could have another major racer on its hands!





SEGA ENTERPRISES

MOTOR RAID

BY	AM1
BOARD	MODEL 3
TYPE	RACING
COMPLETE	40%

With sharp turning bends, deep dips and daunting rises the race tracks of the future are the home of a new intergalactic sport, Motor Raid. AM1's forthcoming racer enables players to race around challenging courses, armed with lethal weapons with which to attack each other. Only the fastest, strongest and the bravest bikers will be able to survive!

Towards the end of a long era of colonisation and outer space development, humanity has settled on a number of planets and established a systematic and peaceful existence. As people became used to this satisfying but dull way of life, they soon desired something that could stimulate their lives. This stimulation quickly evolved and became the biggest form of recreation in the universe, Motor Raid. In the outer limits of this universe there are five interplanetary groups. Players can select from four individual characters and race against other players thanks to a four player linked cabinet. At first glance, Motor Raid may appear to have borrowed more than a few ideas from WipEout but Sega's new Model 3 racer is actually light years ahead with smooth visuals and breakneck gameplay.













Motor Raid shares many similarities with WipEout.



Players mount full-sized bikes armed with laser lances.





Sega are finally developing more Model 3 arcade titles.

OUT NOW

DRAGON FORCE
BY SEGA £44.99 87%

Highly regarded as one of the best adventures you can get for the Saturn, Sega Europe have finally licensed an English language version of the Japanese classic from American translation house Working Designs.

Although Dragon Force is an adventure game, it's best described as a strategy game with some severe role-playing overtones. You're in charge of armies in what must be some of the most sprite-packed battle sequences ever seen - sometimes you see skirmishes with over 200 participants!

With a great plot-line and its awesome battles, Dragon Force could well be contender for "best game ever" to some gamers (it's received huge amounts of accolades in Japan), but others might not warm to its strategy-based gameplay.

Then again, if you're still a Saturn owner by this point, it's probably as much to do with the rich diversity of titles as it is to do with the juggernaut triple A quality titles, so although SSM hasn't given it the over 90% treatment, we really do have to stress that this is a quality game. Check it out.




SONIC JAM
BY SEGA £34.99 92%

When the Sonic Team come up with a new game, every Saturn owner in the world should sit up, take notice, and think a bit about the awesome possibilities! But what about when the Sonic Team come up with an old game, or more specifically four old games?

Well, suffice to say, another round of hushed awe is definitely the order of the day now that Sonic Jam has arrived - a Saturn compilation of every Sonic game released on Megadrive programmed by the original team (Sonics 1 to 3 along with Sonic and Knuckles).

This game is awesome. The Sonic games were magical, supremely playable examples of videogaming and this compilation rams that home with a vengeance! Even the Lock-On technology of Sonic and Knuckles (which could be used with every other Sonic game) has been emulated too. Put simply, there's weeks of Sonic gameplay in this one, and despite the 16-bit graphics, it's hard to put down.





Plus there's SonicWorld - definitely one for the tech-heads here, as you run about a 3D rendition of the Green Hill Zone with senses shattering visuals that redefine your expectations of your machine's capabilities. Well, check out the demo disc this month if you don't believe us!

At this price, this package is unbelievable value. IT MUST BE OWNED. Unless you've got all the Megadrive games, of course... but even then this has a real charm to it.

SKYTARGET
BY SEGA £44.99 73%

The juggernaut that is Sega Japan's arcade conversion programme continues to soar through the AM departments' works, this time bringing us a



translation of the Model 2 reworking of the 1987 AM2 shooter, Afterburner.

There's a fair amount to commend with regards to SkyTarget. The graphics are smooth 30 frames per second affairs, well constructed, with the minimum of the twin terrors that are pop-up and slowdown. The choice of routes is also good, meaning that there's more to discover once you've completed the game.

However, the downers are far more pronounced. The gameplay remains shallow and dull, your enemies need to be shot when they're tiny dots in the distance, reducing the graphical thrill considerably. It's also played at a pretty sedate speed, meaning that the adrenalin rush of the original Afterburner is non-existent. Oh, and the music is some of the most... bizarre... we've ever heard, particularly on the boss stages.

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE is sometimes criticised for its favourable coverage of AM games. Quite simply, that's because they always create solid, hugely enjoyable titles - games that make owning a Saturn hugely rewarding. Unfortunately, SkyTarget is one of those exceptions that proves the rule. Not a good buy in any sense of the word.

To be honext, there exists a vastly under-rated game of this genre which NOT ENOUGH Saturn owners own. Its name is Panzer Dragoon Zwei - a game SSM would definitely have in its Top Ten Saturn titles (If we had such a thing - now there's an idea). It's similar to this yet infinitely superior in enery way.

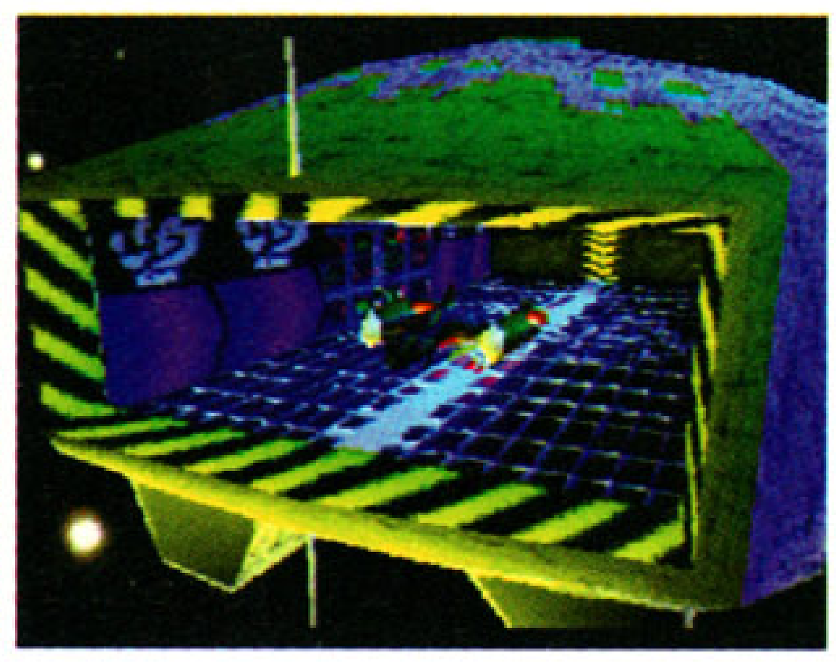


DARKLIGHT CONFLICT
BY EA £44.99 86%

Here comes the first review in months of a Rage Software game that doesn't mention the firm's horrendous conversion of uberblaster, Doom. The firm have definitely turned over a new leaf, providing us with great games in the form of Jonah Lomu Rugby and now Darklight Conflict.

Those of us old enough to remember Elite will get on well with the 3D space blasting action found in this new game, as this is basically a high-tech nineties version of all the shooting bits found in that epoch-making title.

Once you've played through the detailed training missions, there's a really man-sized game underneath. It's not all mindless 3D space blasting either - defending huge outposts, mining for essential minerals and mindless 3D blasting (I lied, there's loads of blasting!) all help to give Darklight Conflict a very interesting and engaging plot. The battle sections are probably the only real complaint, with most dogfights following the same pattern of tracking and shooting. But even this isn't too much of a moan, because the huge collection of weapons and many other diversions in

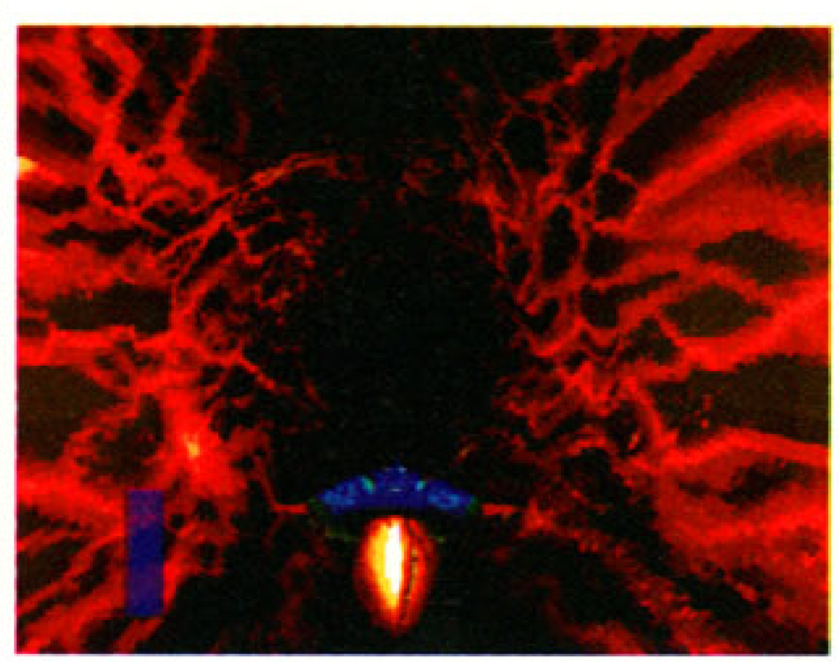


the game help to liven things up beyond the usual shooting action.

With its vast array of missions, cool light-sourced visuals and well judged difficulty curve, it's SSM's pleasure to announce that Darklight Conflict is probably the best game to issue forth from EA's labs since the ace Soviet Strike.

SWAGMAN
BY CORE £44.99 88%

After various delays, Core Design's first game since Tomb Raider has finally hit the shelves. It's been in development for



absolutely years (it was originally a 32X project!) and to be honest we were expecting something sensational considering its long gestation period. What we have eventually received is a great game, but one not likely to appeal to the mass market.

The big thing about Swagman is the fact that in concept it's probably more 16-bit than next generation, merging the overhead style found in classic titles such as Zombies Ate My Neighbours and Nintendo's Super NES Zelda outing. The cool thing about Swagman is the benefits that the power of the Saturn have provided - some amazing graphical effects, plus the sheer size of the game. And that's a very important point to remember: the fact is that when you first check out Swagman, you're unlikely to be over-impressed with it (and the demo Core released in March does little to showcase its true appeal) - but stick with it and the vast amount of cool things in the game become evident.

The choice of characters and creatures available to control is cool, as are the special effects (such as the real-time generated shadows). But just to reiterate the point, it really does take some time to appreciate what the game has to offer.

Still, to sum up, Swagman is an interesting if not technically superb title. It's original, off-beat, but very enjoyable, this is the kind of risk-taking development that's so often applauded by us games journos, but rarely embraced by the gaming public. Hopefully Swagman will be the game to break the mould because it really is worth serious consideration.

Try to get a rent of the full game and see if you want to buy it.



WIPEOUT 2097

BY PSYGNOSIS £44.99 92%

GAME OF THE MONTH — SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE



Okay... so Formula One ISN'T coming to Saturn. Get over it. Psygnosis's most playable racing game (and the one with the best graphics) has arrived on our trusty Sega-branded machines and it's great. Very great in fact. Over the last few months, Saturn has astounded us again and again with 3D that's either on a par with the PlayStation or way better (Sonic Jam, Quake, Last Bronx...), so while this game is definitely one of the former, it's still cool - probably the best conversion we could have hoped for.

With six tracks (plus two more later on), tons of different craft to control, plenty of different speed settings and what have you, it's clear that WipEout 2097 is a classy conversion. The only things lacking are some transparency effects, but perhaps more disappointing is the omission of the licensed music tracks. So any one seeking to zoom around futurescapes to the sound of Firestarter is going to be disappointed. Still, the techno tunes you do get (from Psygnosis' in-house team Cold Storage), do more than a good job of adding to the considerable atmosphere. However, for those of you after the thrilling gameplay of the original, prepare for full-on satisfaction. WipEout 2097 is simply awesome playability in CD form. And for that reason, it shares Game of the Month with Sonic Jam.

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Introducing...

WILLY WOMBAT!





Don't worry about the Japanese text shown below, the characters narrate the whole story in English! Not that you need to follow the story, it's all fairly familiar platform action.







Just this morning, we've heard that Willy Wombat is being converted for release in the US later in the year. This looks good for a UK release as well, as Hudson (also creators of the legendary Bomberman) will do the hard translation work for the US release, making a speedy PAL conversion very simple indeed.

Yes, this game really is called Willy Wombat. Don't ask why, just blame the Japanese, because Willy is currently one of the biggest game stars over in Japan. No he is, really, so join us now as we jump on the Willy Wombat bandwagon travelling at full speed!



Willy Wombat is a platform game, but of course this being 1997 and all that, it's a 3D platform game. But this time it's a 'proper' 3D world and not just a normal platformer with 3D backgrounds - using the shoulder buttons the viewpoint can be rotated 360 degrees around Willy, with some very solid and glitch-free landscapes, it really is very smooth. Willy himself is just a 2D sprite, as are the baddies, but everything seems to be from just the right perspective, so it all has a very solid look to it.

A good description of this game would be 'Grandia for beginners', as it uses the same mixture of 3D backgrounds with colourful 2D sprites, but with simpler graphics, a simpler quest, and a much simpler storyline. Basically, Willy runs about collecting small gems, as part of a larger quest to find the Miracle Gems. Exactly why he needs these gems isn't clear (the manual is all in Japanese), but platform game rule number 124456 subsection (b) states that some type of gem/coin/ring collecting is compulsory in any platform-based entertainment medium, so round up those gems, pronto!

Another handy feature in Willy Wombat is the story - it's all in English! Well, the speech is, so you can follow the between level stories, and there's just some Japanese subtitles for our ker-azy Far Eastern friends to read, which combined with some traditional gem-collecting platform action, makes Willy Wombat a pretty worthwhile import purchase for any hardcore platform game fans out there. As long as you can bring yourself to buy a game called Willy Wombat, mind you...

The 3D landscapes are pretty cool - just when you think you've come to a dead-end, a quick spin around usually reveals which way to go.





Dear Newsagent,

Okay, those crazy SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE lads have convinced me. My life is incomplete without their witty banter, appalling innuendoes and Lee Nutter's banal comments. So forget my monthly copy of Razzle, I'll have this glorious publication instead. Ta!

NAME ______________________

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NEXT MONTH...

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE's October issue promises to be (cue games mag cliché) a veritable cornucopia of excitement! We'll have reviews of Duke Nukem 3D and Last Bronx, more exclusive Sonic R coverage. We should also be starting our mammoth Quake coverage too! And that's just the beginning... the next issue of SSM will be stinking hot!

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, OCTOBER ISSUE, OUT SEPTEMBER 17! COOLIO!




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NEW Clearasil
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CLEARASIL COMPLETE IS FIVE TIMES BETTER THAN ORDINARY SOAP AT BEATING SPOTS* AND IS AVAILABLE IN AN EASY TO USE PUMP ACTION BOTTLE.
ITS DEEP-CLEANSING MICROBEAD FORMULA AND SPECIAL SPOT STUFF GETS RIGHT TO THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM, KILLING BACTERIA WHICH CAN CAUSE UNWANTED ZITS.
USED EVERYDAY CLEARASIL COMPLETE WILL HELP KEEP YOUR SKIN FEELING CLEAN AND FRESH. ALTOGETHER, IT'S A VERY SIMPLE WAY TO HELP STAY ZIT-FREE.
ALL YOU NEED TO HELP BEAT SPOTS!
NEW Clearasil COMPLETE
*CLINICAL STUDY RUN OVER 8 WEEK PERIOD.